


Council of the District of Columbia

Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Hearing Record

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 108, Washington, DC 20004

To: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

From: Brooke Pinto, Chairperson 
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Date: October 18, 2023

Subject: On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of
Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

On September 27, 2023, the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety held a public roundtable “On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department”. Notice of this public hearing was published in the District of Columbia Register on September 1, 2023 and the record remained open until October 11, 2023. A video recording of the hearing can be viewed online at oct.dc.gov

The following witnesses submitted testimony for the record:

- 1D CAC
- ACLU-DC
- Pamela A. Smith
- Akosua Ali
- Al Hajj Mahdi Leroy Thorpe Jr.
- Andrew Wiles
- Beverly Anderson
- Bill Rice
- Brenda Lee Richardson
- Brian D. Harris
- Brian M. Mulholland
- Catherine Schoenwetter
- Charlotte Schwartz
- Cherita Whiting
- DC Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers
- Diane Groomes

- Dr. Christina Grant
- Elizabeth Costanzo
- Erin Taylor
- Fritz Mulhauser
- Gregory Pemberton
- J. Thomas Manger
- J.P. Szymkowicz
- James Costello
- James Irby
- Jean-Marc Bernard
- Joanne Stratton Tate
- Karen Gaal
- Kathy Henderson
- Kevin Wrege
- Kirk McLean
- Kundan Karkhanis
- Laelia Gilborn
- Laura Wilson
- Leroy Swain
- Linda Green
- Michael Skinner
- Kathy Patterson
- Paul Thorpe
- Rebecca Winthrop
- Lisa Leval
- Retirees for Accountability
- Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry
- Rev. Wanda Thompson
- Robert Stanton
- Robert Winthrop
- Sandra “SS” Seegars
- Thennie Freeman, DPR
- Ward 7 Faith Leaders

ATTACHMENTS

- (A) Witness List
- (B) Hearing Notice
- (C) Copies of written testimony



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
BROOKE PINTO, CHAIR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ROUNDTABLE

**On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of
Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department**

Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

Room 500, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Councilmember Pinto's Youtube Page (www.youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto)

DC Council Website (dccouncil.gov)

Council Channel 13 (Cable Television Providers)

Office of Cable Television Website (entertainment.dc.gov)

PUBLIC WITNESSES

1. Brian M. Mulholland, Public Witness
2. Cherita Whiting, Chair, Ward 4 Education Council
3. Mahdi Leroy Thorpe, Citizens Organization Patrol Efforts the Red Hats Patrol
4. Robert Vinson Brannum, Ward 5 Leadership Council Public Safety Committee
5. Ron Williams Jr., Public Witness
6. Rahman Branch, Public Witness
7. Stephanie Campbell, Congress Heights Community Training & Development Corporation
8. Wendall Quann, Destination Congress Heights
9. Troy Shockley, Public Witness
10. Cora Masters Barry, Public Witness
11. Lisa Leval, Second District Citizens Advisory Council
12. Fritz Mulhauser, DC Open Government Coalition
13. Irwin Royster, Co-Convener, Ward 7 Faith Leaders
14. Kendrick Curry, Pastor, The Pennsylvania Ave. Baptist Church
15. Kenneth Rioland Jr., Paramount Baptist Church
16. Brent Sullivan, Public Witness
17. Neena Murphy Martin, Fourth District Citizens Advisory Council (4D CAC)
18. Darrell K. White, Public Witness

19. Kevin Wrege, Public Witness
20. Kathy Henderson, ANC 5D06 5D Court Watch
21. Christine Warnke, Public Witness
22. Karen Gaal, Third District MPD Citizen's Advisory Council
23. Laura Wilson, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated-District of Columbia

24. Brenda Lee Richardson, PSA 702 Outreach Committee

25. Deborah Steiner, Public Witness
26. Monica Hopkins, ACLU of the District of Columbia
27. Sandra Seegars, Concerned Residents Against Violence (CRAV)
28. Akosua Ali, NAACP
29. Patrick Burke, Washington DC Police Foundation
30. Monica Ray, Congress Heights Partnership
31. Kenneth Barnes, Rotary Club for Washington, DC and Time For Us To Get Involved.
32. Joyce Robinson-Paul, Public Witness
33. Derek Davis, Retirees for Accountability
34. Robbie Woodland, ANC 8C06
35. Robert Pittman, First District Police Citizens' Advisory Council
36. Patrick O'Keefe, Public Witness
37. Paula Edwards, ANC 4A01
38. J.P. Szymkowicz, ANC 3D07
39. Gregory Pemberton, DC Police Union
40. Jay Brown, Community Shoulders
41. Leroy Swain, Public Witness

NOMINEE

1. Pamela A. Smith

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
BROOKE PINTO, CHAIR

REVISED

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ROUNDTABLE

**On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of
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Office of Cable Television Website (entertainment.dc.gov)

On Wednesday, September 27, 2023, Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chairwoman of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, will hold a public roundtable on the matter of the nomination of Pamela A. Smith to be the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. The roundtable will begin at 11:00 a.m. in Room 500 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004. The roundtable will be broadcast live on DC Council Channel 13 and streamed live at www.dccouncil.us, entertainment.dc.gov, and youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto.

The Committee invites the public to testify. Those who wish to do so must register using the Council's Hearing Management System at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings> by **11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023**. Those who represent organizations will have 5 minutes to speak. All other witnesses will have 3 minutes to speak. **Witnesses will have the option to testify in person or virtually**; witnesses should specify which option they are electing at the time they sign up to testify.

Witnesses who anticipate needing spoken language interpretation, or who require sign language interpretation, are requested to inform the Committee office of the need as soon as possible, but no later than 5 business days before the proceeding. We will make every effort to fulfill timely requests, although alternatives may be offered. Requests may be submitted via the Hearing Management System during registration or by contacting Ms. Aukima Benjamin, Committee Manager to the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, at (202) 724-8058 or via e-mail at judiciary@dccouncil.gov. Requests received less than 5 business days before the proceeding may not be fulfilled. Witnesses will receive instructions on how to participate by Zoom prior to the roundtable. If you have additional questions, please contact the Committee Manager at the phone number or e-mail listed above.

If you are unable to testify at the public roundtable, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record; written testimony should be submitted through the Council's

Hearing Management System at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings>. Testimony will be publicly accessible following Committee review. The public may also leave voicemail testimony for the Committee by calling (202) 630-7585, which will be transcribed and made part of the roundtable record. Members of the public leaving voicemail testimony should speak slowly and clearly, state their full name and the organization they represent, if any, and note the bill, hearing, or agency that they are submitting testimony on. For privacy purposes, members of the public are asked to not provide an e-mail, phone number, or other personal contact information in voicemail testimony.

The record will close at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 11, 2023.

This roundtable notice was revised to reflect a new roundtable date of September 27, 2023, as well as changes to the deadline for public witnesses to sign up to testify at the roundtable and the date that the roundtable record will close.



MPD First District Citizens' Advisory Council, Inc.

Connecting MPD through People, Technology and Information

Testimony (Combined)

of

Robert Pittman

Chairman

First District Police Citizens' Advisory Council, Inc.

Before

The Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Brooke Pinto, Esq.

Chairwoman

Anita Bonds, At-Large Member

Christina Henderson, At-Large Member

Charles Allen, Ward 6 Member

Vincent Gray, Ward 7 Member

Phil Mendelson, Council Chairman

Kenyan McDuffie, Esq. Chairman Pro Tempore

Robert White, Jr., Esq. At-Large Member

Brianne K. Nadeau, Ward 1 Member

Matthew Frumin, Esq. Ward 3 Member

Janeese Lewis George, Ward 4 Member

Zachary Parker, Ward 5 Member

Trayon White, Sr. Ward 8 Member

On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

Wednesday 27 September 2023

11:00 AM

Greetings Chairwoman Pinto, Members of the Judiciary Committee, Chief Pamela Smith, Members of the Metropolitan Police Department, fellow CACs', and our general community,

On behalf of the First District Police Citizens' Advisory Council, I submit this testimony on the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to assume the massive responsibility of guiding the Metropolitan Police Department into its next chapter.

When Chief Smith assumed the position of Chief of the United States Park Police (USPP), I reached out to congratulate her. Later, I would invite her to be a partner in the First District National Night Out celebration, which she graciously accepted. The support provided to the First District team was amazing! Chief Smith and USPP engaged the hundreds of residents that participated in our National Night Out at Lincoln Park. It was a wonderful opportunity for her and all to engage the community and meet our CAC members and ANC Commissioners.

Bob Contee created the next significant interaction by informing me that a Chief Equity Officer was coming on board. I had discussed equity issues on several occasions with him prior to this notification. He fulfilled a promise related to this subject. I knew the professional background of Chief Smith but had not talked to her regarding that subject matter. I asked that she be introduced to the Chief of Police Advisory Council so that we could query her on what equity looks like from her perspective.

I wanted to understand where on the spectrum we would find her as it related to equity. I wanted to know how she would address culture, resistance, equity beyond just hiring, but retention, work environment, jealousy, animosity, retaliation, reverse minority opinions, testing and training equity. I was curious about the age-old question; what diversity is and what does diversity look like when you are looking at a group of people who mostly all seem to belong to the same groupings but are as different as the many shades of gray.

The responses from Pam revealed clear thought, the ability to analyze real time situations, creative and logical discussion on topics that many would struggle to articulate. She attended various CAC meetings and demonstrated that she understood the need to have data driven approaches. It became clear that some issues could not be resolved simply by issuing a general order. In other words, there must be buy in. She had to be approachable by all consumers which she would have contact with in this position.

The CACs asked Members about their thoughts on this new initiative, and we found widespread approval and indications of hope and change. That gets us to this moment. Hope and Change.

This CAC comes to the following conclusions based on interviews with community to include police:

- Pam Smith is a superior candidate for this position. However, this is the Police and in any police organization TRUST is essential. If any citizen or citizen council member expects one person's confirmation to be the end of the discussion, then we need to have more discussions.

- If anyone expects Pam Smith to stop all crime, we need to have further discussions. This must be a multi-agency approach combined with residents and businesses from across the eight wards and neighborhoods. Community members must be willing to let go of personal grievances and street boundaries and band together for the betterment of the entire city-state.
- If you call the police, they come 24 hours a day. But our police are going to need the help of agencies that close at 5pm. As this CAC has stated many times before we need those agencies with their emergency response teams to be available from 9pm to 5am to support what MPD and its Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) partners always do in our city-state.
- We are appointing an executive and drum major to establish the Beat. I am confident she will do her part in crime fighting, reestablishing the ability of police officers to engage community and learn the unique qualities of their respective patrol areas and the people who live, do business and play in those areas. That is how you fight the most violent of crimes, that is how you catch those who murder, maim and strangle, because the community has trust and will tell the officers what needs to be known.
- The Community bears a responsibility to deter crime, not just police forces. As Community we must recognize that Part I offenses and Part II offenses each have negative impacts on the neighborhoods. When we minimize Part II offenses and the media publicizes those comments, we are sending messages to those who have nothing to lose that it's okay to steal, break into cars, play loud music all day or night, ride ATVs through traffic and all the other concerns fellow citizens complain about at our community meetings, tweets, and emails.
- We believe that in order to fully understand policing in this city-state we must have a wider net that looks at how security officers use their police powers, federal police agencies, our regional police (Metro Transit and Amtrak Police) and our other local police forces apply their police regulations and the impact that has on the community at-large. Comparing our city to San Francisco or New York has little value to us. Watching so-called experts talk about crime trends in our city is laughable. We can do better creating our own matrix.

Upon confirmation, Chief Smith becomes the voice and image of the MPD institution. If we want the institution to be successful, it can't stop at confirmation. This CAC believes the following must occur:

- We must support the Rank and File and let the remaining Sworn members know we have their backs. Most police are out day and night fighting for what citizens say they want safety, security, and fair justice in arrests.

- We must ensure that police stations get renovated or we build new facilities that meet code and have building certificates. Elevators must operate and toilets must flush. Lighting must be appropriate for the work environment.
- We must ensure that facilities are comfortably air conditioned when needed and comfortably heated when needed, regardless of the time of year. If parts are needed or there is a history of needing the parts in a specific building on an annual basis, then stockpile them! Locking prisoners in conditions that would be expected in Bogata will lead to the untimely death of someone especially one who is impaired or has a health condition. I think we all want to avoid that headline.
- If Body Worn Camera Footage surfaces that gives an angle of an event that appears to be an offense to the affected person and the community, consider waiting for more independent footage. If we cast doubt on our own police officers, without knowing the facts, we harm everyone involved. The presumption of innocence is given to citizens, shouldn't we do the same for citizens who wear badges and wait for adjudication?
- Please reconsider the ability of an officer to review body worn camera footage for the ability to write a complete report of the incident.
- Consider reexamining chokeholds and police restraints to determine if the laws in place just protect the person being arrested and/or if the current laws produce regulations that put the arresting officer(s) in harms way. Weighing the costs of liability litigation to performance of duty injuries claims, police officer litigation and the cost to the officer and the taxpayer and its effects on police retention. There are no isolated events, and the unintended results are police will leave or simply not perform as the community expects for fear of adverse actions and possibly termination. Without a cost effectiveness analysis of the legislation and the resulting regulations we cannot adequately determine the true measure of the tool that has been implemented.
- This CAC believes we can work together to create compromises that meet the goals of those on all sides of these issues.
- We must also measure the impact of MPD having to patrol Metrobus, Metrobus shelters and Metro stations in the District and how this impacts service to other locations in the respective Patrol Service Areas. The drain on manpower does not end there. There is a need to have police posted at different locations where it is known there will be significant gunfire, burglaries, affray, or robberies.

- Retail crime and parking garage attacks are increasing which also drain police resources.
- We must ensure that civilian employees have the tools they need to support the LEA side in performing their roles and that the civilian employees feel whole and are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.
- There has been a push for more data around policing. This CAC agrees with that assessment and has long sought those changes. Our recommendation is that while this legislative body reprograms monies to alternative programs, data shows there is a need for fixed funding in the areas of technology and data specialists dedicated to extrapolating the right information that is useable for all of us including police managers and directors to completely understand what is happening with our policing and how it affects all segments of the communities' police district by district.
- We have used 4200 as a fixed number for police since I introduced that number based on my own analysis in 1997. At the time our population was under 580,000 residents and Chinatown and the sports arenas had not yet come online.
- Consider its time to raise the sworn officer number to 5000. Here is why. Only looking at patrol or thinking that every nonpatrol officer should always be on the streets is not effectively understanding the organization. There is a need to understand limited duty officers and non-contact officers and how these categories impact staffing and planning. This assumption does not consider the number of officers in Roll Call on a day to day, does not include the vast number of cases created every day and the flow of investigations that require a detective.
- Caseloads for detectives are too high. In CAC meetings residents often complain that it takes too long for detectives to respond to them. We don't blame detectives; we blame the lack of personnel necessary to meet the demand. The stress on detectives, the burnout factor we believe, contributes to the lag time in developing leads and to close case timely.
- Members need time for training and if you pull them out for required training or remedial training, there is no longer anyone to backfill those positions, yet the calls for service continue to come in on an hourly basis. Everyone says they want to see more officer training. If we continue this way, we will begin to look like other cities where it takes upward of an hour before police can respond to calls for service. Washington, DC, can't afford that for our citizens, our businesses, and our tourists.

- There are certain programs like Beat The Streets where we need a dedicated funding stream of at least \$40,000.00 per year. Depending on how much food and supplies purchased we could have upwards of 12-15 events. Adjusted for inflation this would be \$2600.00 per event. This CAC was able to step in pay on average \$2200.00 per event to keep BTS going. But it got tough, however we succeeded until MPD was able to support and rescue the program. This CAC's funders were also there to support Beat The Streets program.
- Beat The Streets is a program that needs a dedicated team of at least 12-15 sworn members that can't be removed at a whim, but must work to the success of the program. This year's series of events made contact with more than 13000 individuals, and we can document the differences it made in the communities. An example of this is a comment by DC Central Kitchen which has wanted to have an impact at specific sites. However, the danger to personnel prevented their staff from going to certain locations. Having a police presence and the BTS program empowered DC Central Kitchen to go where they have not gone before.
- The BTS volunteers, vendors, health service agencies, police cadets and the side by side band are phenomenal!
- I am asking this Committee to work with the COP and create a line item in the Fiscal 2025 budget of \$40,000.00 to be used exclusively for BTS.
- I'm asking the COP to ensure that a liaison be established to work through the myriad of issues we encounter every year to get permits from DDOT and also DOH inspectors who attempt to make what is already a difficult task even harder to prepare for these massive BTS events.

We have great programs in DC and some of you council members do really great work in communities that you care about. If we can work together, our little monies when combined can reach many more people. We can help many more people if we are all working together.

We all must assist Chief Smith in promoting the need to be good to everyone, police included. We believe Chief Smith will surround herself with individuals who will be honest with her and not just tell her what she wants to hear.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify and remain available for any questions.

The following supplemental items have been modified from the original presentation in Council testimony on 21 October 2021. It is my hope that the Council and this Committee will reexamine the points listed:

1. In testimony it has been stated that: *In the District of Columbia, we have some high-level data illuminating these disparities. According to the 2017 Civil Rights Data Collection Report by the U.S. Department of Education, Black students in the District of Columbia make up 71% of students but account for nearly 91% of school-based arrests. Latinx students make up the other 9%. The survey also found that 27% of students receiving referrals to law enforcement were students with disabilities. Furthermore, the Black Swan Academy found that 60% of girls arrested in DC are under the age of 15, with Black girls in DC 30 times more likely to be arrested than White youth of any gender identity.*
2. Can the police be blamed for the aforementioned statement? The real question is why are the police called in the first place? If we accept that the teachers and the administrators know that 27% of the students have disabilities, what school protocols and training exist for them to mitigate the circumstances surrounding these incidents? Maybe records would give us a better understanding of what School Resource Officers, counselors and nurses face when in schools?
3. It is this CACs' belief that we can't lose sight of testimonies and legislation of the past and the impacts it has had. We pray that the Council will take another look into these issues from all sides. We respect everyone's views and we simply wish to ensure that legislation has been a benefit and not a hinderance to the administration of justice.

**Statement on behalf of the
American Civil Liberties Union of the District of Columbia
before the D.C. Council Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Public Roundtable
on the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of
Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department
by
Monica Hopkins, Executive Director
September 27, 2023**

Good morning, Chairperson Pinto and members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety. I am Monica Hopkins, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of the District of Columbia. Today, on behalf of the ACLU of D.C. and our over 14,000 members in all 8 wards, I submit the following testimony to share factors the D.C. Council should consider as it takes up Mayor Bowser's nomination of Acting Police Chief Pamela A. Smith for Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD, the Department).

The new MPD Chief must address the Department's long history of failure to hold officers accountable when they violate District law and Department policies. Failures of accountability weaken public trust in officers and the Department as a whole, making it more difficult to address community needs and public safety concerns.

More broadly, District leaders, including the new Chief, must recognize that creating an environment in which people across the District feel safe will require investment in a range of District agencies, as well as community organizations, which can respond to the specific needs that people experience more effectively. Public safety discussions should not center MPD, or equate police with public safety. District leaders must think beyond "crime and punishment" approaches that have devastated District communities.

We urge the Council to embrace a more comprehensive, systemic public safety approach, one that engages and partners with multiple agencies, and to ensure that the next Police Chief does so too.

As Council members continue to consider Acting Chief Smith, we urge you to engage with members of the community, particularly community members who have long raised concerns about mistreatment by MPD officers, the Department's lack of accountability, and the need for a range of approaches to public safety needs.

The Next MPD Chief Must Address Long-Standing Failures of Accountability Within MPD

The ACLU-D.C. believes strongly that a robust system of public safety cannot be successful without mechanisms to hold police accountable when they abuse their powers. We have staunchly advocated for increased transparency and accountability within the District's policing apparatus. Over the years, we have testified, held meetings, and submitted letters and emails urging different iterations of the D.C. Council to take bold action and establish mechanisms that hold the Department and its officers accountable when they violate Department policies or District laws. We have raised concerns about MPD's abuses of power and the perils of the Department being the sole arbiter of its own disciplinary actions for serious misconduct. We have continuously submitted recommendations for actionable steps the Council could take to bring about needed transparency and accountability. Some of our recommendations have included:

1. Transferring responsibility for discipline for serious misconduct from MPD to an impartial third-party entity.
2. Establishing meaningful consequences for when MPD or its officers violate MPD policies or District laws.
3. Passing an amendment to the Police Misconduct Database subtitle of the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Amendment Act of 2021 to include the total number of unique allegations made against an officer, not just cases that have been substantiated. Only including substantiated cases in the database does not provide the full scope of officer misconduct within MPD. And as we have also noted in the past, most cases do not get to the level of being substantiated due to the current structure of the disciplinary system.
4. Passing strong legislation to end qualified immunity, which shields police officers from accountability when they violate the constitutional rights of community members.

Numerous articles, reports, and lawsuits have been published and filed over the last few years detailing a wide range of misconduct within MPD, how the Department has handled officer misbehavior, and the cost of police misconduct to the

District.^{1,2,3} From not collecting and publishing data on stops required by the NEAR Act,⁴ to obfuscating Freedom of Information Act requests.⁵ From officers violating the constitutional rights of District residents⁶ to retaliation against officers who speak out against wrongdoing,⁷ and officers assaulting and threatening coworkers;⁸ MPD has a long history of flouting its own policies and District laws.

We continue to be concerned about the unlawful use of stop and frisk.⁹ MPD officers have conducted searches that went far beyond limited pat-downs for weapons,

¹ Hermann, P. and Silverman, E. “Three D.C. police officers suspended after video shows man repeatedly struck during arrest.” Washington Post, August 9, 2021. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/dc-police-punch-suspect/2021/08/09/bc30e9b2-f930-11eb-8a67-f14cd1d28e47_story.html.

² Mehrotra, D., Gathright, J. and Austermuhle, M. “D.C. Police Tried To Fire 24 Current Officers For ‘Criminal Offenses.’ A Powerful Panel Blocked Nearly Every One, Documents Show.” DCist. December 28, 2021. Available at <https://dcist.com/story/21/12/18/dc-police-panel-blocked-mpd-firings/>.

³ Alexander, K. L., Rich, S., and Thacker, H. “The hidden billion-dollar cost of repeated police misconduct.” Washington Post, March 9, 2022. Available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/police-misconduct-repeated-settlements>

⁴ Grablick, C. and Lefrak, M. “MPD Releases Year’s Worth Of Police Stop Data Following ACLU Lawsuit.” DCist, March 6, 2021. Available at <https://dcist.com/story/21/03/06/mpd-releases-years-worth-of-police-stop-data-following-aclu-lawsuit/>.

⁵ Segraves, M. “‘There Is No Watchlist’: DC Police Chief Shoots Down Public Info Claim.” NBC 4 News, February 3, 2022. Available at <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/there-is-no-watchlist-dc-police-chief-shoots-down-public-info-claim/2960345/>.

⁶ Crudup et. al. complaint. Case 1:20-cv-01135, United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Available at www.scribd.com/document/498469099/Crudup-Et-Al-Complaint.

⁷ A lawsuit by a veteran sergeant of the MPD alleged retaliation from Department leadership for speaking out against the use of “jump-outs”. The veteran sergeant contended that the practice was encouraged by commanders and fellow officers. Flack, E. “Veteran sergeant sues DC Police, claiming retaliation for reporting improper tactics.” WUSA9, October 15, 2020. Available at www.wusa9.com/article/news/investigations/veteran-sergeant-sues-dc-police-claiming-retaliation-for-reporting-improper-tactics/65-5aba5f74-e349-427f-88ad-8adbd5a43a3b

⁸ Grablick, C. “D.C. Police Officer Sentenced for Assaulting, Threatening Coworkers.” DCist, March 2, 2023. Available at <https://dcist.com/story/23/03/02/dc-police-officer-sentenced-assaults/>

⁹ A frisk is when a police officer pats or sweep the outside of a person’s clothes to check if they have weapons.

including conducting sexually invasive searches of D.C. residents¹⁰ and the reported continued use of “jump-outs.”¹¹ An ongoing 2020 class action lawsuit alleged that MPD’s Gun Recovery Unit “has a policy of stopping, frisking, and searching Black people without reasonable suspicion or probable cause, and that they fabricate information to justify the stops, frisks, and searches.”¹² Previous Chiefs of Police, including Lanier, Newsham, and Contee, have denied the use of these tactics despite veteran members of the force alleging these practices were encouraged by commanders and fellow officers.^{13,14}

MPD’s own data show major racial disparities in stops of individuals in the District, with stops disproportionately targeting Black people. An analysis of data on stops MPD officers made during 2020 indicated that although Black people comprised about 46 percent of the D.C. population, they represented 86.5 percent of stops, and over 90 percent of searches that resulted in no warning, ticket, or arrest (a slight increase from the previous year).¹⁵

¹⁰ In 2018, ACLU-D.C. represented M.B. Cottingham in settling a case against then-GRU officer Sean Lojano for an exceedingly invasive bodily search. The lawsuit stemmed from a 2017 incident in which Mr. Cottingham was stopped for an open container violation. After Mr. Cottingham consented to a frisk, Officer Lojano went far beyond what should have been a limited pat-down for weapons. Officer Lojano jammed his fingers between Mr. Cottingham’s buttocks and grabbed his genitals. Mr. Cottingham physically flinched and verbally protested, making clear that this highly intrusive search was not within the scope of the frisk to which he had consented. Officer Lojano responded by handcuffing Mr. Cottingham and returning to probe the most sensitive areas of his person — two more times. Officer Lojano was fired in September 2018 for a similar incident, which happened to occur just 30 minutes after the Cottingham encounter.

¹¹ The paramilitary technique in which police drive upon (usually in unmarked vehicles) a group of people (usually Black and brown men), jump out (often with guns drawn), and quickly start searching the people without probable cause or consent is colloquially called “jump-outs” by community members.

¹² *Id.* at note 6.

¹³ Flack, E. and Wilson, S. “DC Police chief testifies he did not investigate report of unconstitutional police stops known as ‘jump outs’.” WUSA9, February 6, 2023. Available at www.wusa9.com/article/features/originals/dc-police-jump-outs-tyre-nichols-dc-police-unconstitutional-stop/65-a170a6af-613f-4adf-97ef-7c3b7972c40f.

¹⁴ Flack, E. “Veteran sergeant sues DC Police, claiming retaliation for reporting improper tactics.” WUSA9, October 15, 2020. Available at www.wusa9.com/article/news/investigations/veteran-sergeant-sues-dc-police-claiming-retaliation-for-reporting-improper-tactics/65-5aba5f74-e349-427f-88ad-8adbd5a43a3b.

¹⁵ ACLU Analytics and ACLU of the District of Columbia. “Racial Disparities in Stops by the Metropolitan Police Department: 2020 Data Update.” Released March 11, 2021. Available at

The new police chief must be willing to scrutinize these issues and address them at the structural level.

MPD's Current Discipline System is Not Working

A July Washington City Paper (City Paper) article described instances in which the Office of Police Complaints (OPC) found MPD officers to have abused their power.¹⁶ OPC reported that officers verbally harassed and used unnecessary force against members of the public, including children, made false reports, failed to follow Department procedures, and exhibited other unprofessional behaviors in the course of their duties.^{17,18}

City Paper found the vast majority of officers against whom complaints were filed and sustained by OPC did not face any meaningful consequences.¹⁹ In all of the cases, the police chief had sole discretion to impose discipline. In lieu of corrective or adverse action, Former Chief Contee often only gave officers a letter in their file or recommended education-based development—a response so minimal that OPC noted in an October 2020 report that it would not consider it discipline.²⁰ As stated

<https://www.acludc.org/en/publications/racial-disparities-stops-metropolitan-police-department-2020-data-update>.

¹⁶ Ryals, M. “D.C. Police Chief Robert Contee Was Soft on Discipline, Civilian Oversight Office Says.” Washington City Paper, July 10, 2023. Available at <https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/613340/d-c-police-chief-robert-contee-was-soft-on-discipline-civilian-oversight-office-says/>.

¹⁷ D.C. Office of Police Complaints. Findings of Fact and Merits Determination. Completed by Meaghan Hannan Davant January 23, 2022. Available at <https://policecomplaints.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/office%20of%20police%20complaints/publication/attachments/Merits%20Determination%20-%202021-0259.pdf>.

¹⁸ D.C. Office of Police Complaints. Findings of Fact and Merits Determination. Completed by Peter W. Tague November 19, 2021. Available at <https://policecomplaints.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/office%20of%20police%20complaints/publication/attachments/Merits%20Determination%20-%202021-0453.pdf>.

¹⁹ Washington City Paper conducted a review of cases and found that of the 41 sustained complaints for violations of District law or internal policies during former Police Chief Robert Contee’s two-and-a-half-year tenure as chief, only seven officers were issued suspensions.

²⁰ An October 2020 OPC report on MPD discipline emphasized the fact that the education-based development to which officers are often referred is merely additional training. These trainings typically cover basic things that are taught extensively at the police academy and should be clearly understood by officers — hence why they were not listed in MPD’s own table of penalties. In the

in that report, low-level reprimands “allow officers to believe that complaints from community members are unimportant and that MPD tolerates, or endorses, behaviors likely to produce complaints.”

Chief Contee’s failure to impose meaningful discipline was so concerning that the Executive Director of OPC, Michael Tobin, sent a letter to Contee in March of 2022.²¹ In his letter, Director Tobin noted (as ACLU-D.C. has also done many times) that “particularly with citizen complaints, MPD has demonstrated on repeated occasions over many years and several police chiefs that the department is not willing or able to provide proper accountability of its members.”²²

MPD’s Failure to Hold Officers Accountable has Consequences for Public Safety

During his July 10th legislative press briefing and the Council’s July 11th Legislative session, Chairman Mendelson emphasized that one of the biggest issues with fighting crime in D.C. is MPD’s low closure rates for homicides. The Chairman also noted one of the barriers to closing cases is community members not coming forward to speak with the police.²³

Distrust of the police has serious consequences. It undermines the legitimacy of law enforcement, and without legitimacy police lose their ability and authority to function. An environment in which police officers are not consistently and meaningfully held accountable for misconduct significantly erodes community trust in the Department—and with it, any sense of cooperation between harmed communities and the police.

report, OPC noted that it would not consider education-based development a form of discipline, because this type of action is usually not the appropriate response to sustained misconduct (and therefore unlikely to deter future violations). Office of Police Complaints. “PCB Policy Report #21-2: Discipline.” Released October 14, 2021. Available at https://policecomplaints.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/office%20of%20police%20complaints/publication/attachments/Discipline.FINAL_.PDF.

²¹ Letter to Chief Contee from OPC Director Michael Tobin Re: Lack of Discipline of D.C. Police Officers. Sent March 25, 2022. Available at <https://policecomplaints.dc.gov/release/office-police-complaints-executive-director-sends-letter-dc-police-chief-addressing-lack>.

²² *Id.*

²³ D.C. Council Twelfth Legislative Meeting, held July 11, 2023. Available at https://dc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=8387.

Building legitimacy and trust is highlighted by the President’s Task force on 21st Century Policing in its 2015 report as the foundational principle in police-community relations and an essential component in police’s ability to partner with communities. As stated in the report’s First Pillar:

“Building trust and nurturing legitimacy on both sides of the police/citizen divide is the foundational principle underlying the nature of relations between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Decades of research and practice support the premise that people are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have authority that is perceived as legitimate by those subject to the authority. The public confers legitimacy only on those whom they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. In addition, law enforcement cannot build community trust if it is seen as an occupying force coming in from outside to impose control on the community.”²⁴

Communities experiencing gun violence are also communities that have historically experienced the most harm from policing. It is absurd to expect members of Black and brown communities, who are continually harmed by policing, to start trusting the police when 1) harmful police practices continue and 2) officers who are found to have violated Department policies and District laws are essentially slapped on the wrist²⁵ and continue to be promoted²⁶. A Department without accountability cannot be expected to engender trust from the communities they are sworn to protect. MPD’s own general orders recognize the impact of officer behavior on public support

²⁴ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. May 2015. Available at https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

²⁵ One of the incidents that led Director Tobin to raise concerns about Chief Contee’s disciplinary decisions had to do with officer John Wright. Wright had conducted an illegal search of a woman’s home in June of 2020. The woman later file a complaint with OPC in July alleging harassment and unlawful entrance into her apartment complaint available at <https://policecomplaints.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/office%20of%20police%20complaints/publication/attachments/Merits%20Determination%20-%202020-0644.pdf>. The complaint was sustained and Chief Contee communicated to the woman that “he intended to fine or suspend Wright for what ended up being an illegal search of the woman’s apartment.” Contee instead issued officer Wright a form (PD62-E, available at <https://go.mpdonline.com/GO/3741000.pdf>.) used to document an officer’s behavior, but that, according to Director Tobin, ‘does not constitute corrective action.’ *Id. at note 23*.

²⁶ *Id. note at 2*.

and cooperation.²⁷ Yet, repeatedly, officers, and the Department as a whole, engage in actions that directly contradict principles that would produce trust.

The Council Must Ensure that MPD Prioritizes Accountability

Misconduct by MPD officers costs the District millions of dollars every year; dollars that would be better spent on resources that actually address public safety concerns and challenges confronting D.C. communities most harmed by both police and gun violence. Before confirming Acting Chief Smith, the Council should closely examine, and question, the candidate's actionable goals for ensuring accountability — particularly for handling serious misconduct cases that harm members of the community.

Council members must be confident that the new Chief will commit to re-establishing police legitimacy, which requires procedural justice—that police listen to community members, show care for them, and treat them with respect and fairness. This requires the new Chief to hold officers accountable when officers disrespect the communities they serve and their civil rights and liberties. We will continue to have growing public safety issues and MPD will continue to have the same ailments, and community distrust, if its Chief does not lead with integrity and a clear plan for establishing better accountability mechanisms.

The Next MPD Chief Must Embrace a Comprehensive Vision of Public Safety that Reduces the Role of Law Enforcement

Every District resident deserves safety and security. To achieve this District leaders, including the Police Chief, must work to embrace and implement a comprehensive approach to and shared responsibility for public safety. The Council should recognize the unrealistic burden the public and government officials have placed on officers to prevent, respond to, and solve every real and perceived

²⁷ Section V.E. of MPD General Order 201.26, "Citizen-Police Officer Relationships," states: "[i]t is expected that every member of this Department is keenly aware of the fact that public support and cooperation is essential if members are to effectively fulfill their police responsibilities. The extent to which the public will cooperate with the MPD is dependent upon its respect for, and confidence in, the MPD and its members. In any effort to strengthen the citizen-police officer relationship, the personal conduct and attitude of the police officer is of paramount importance. Members must understand that the basis of a professional attitude is a desire and a willingness to serve the public."

community problem, such as mental health issues, homelessness, truancy, and drug addiction.²⁸

The Council and public bear responsibility for inappropriately addressing gaps in societal issues, such as inadequate housing, health care, education, and economic systems, with police. The new Chief, and the Council, should support police and the community by advocating for a more limited role for MPD within a larger constellation of appropriate public safety policies and interventions, which create better outcomes for communities and public safety.

Creating a comprehensive approach to public safety should include the following values:

- Recognition that public safety requires more than policing;
- Respect for public safety expertise that exists in communities and non-police institutions; and
- Respect for the rights and needs of the community members who such reforms are designed to protect.

Using these values as a basis for any reform proposal begins to create shared responsibility for public safety and an infrastructure that can actually prevent, address, and solve community and societal problems. The Council should ensure the next Chief is willing to shift the culture of MPD and its officers from that of “warrior,” an approach that focuses solely on enforcement and creates an “us versus them” mentality, to “guardian” of communities, which increases legitimacy and trust in police by listening to, partnering with and respecting communities.²⁹ This approach has been discussed for years as a way to increase public and officer safety and undergirds the 21st Century Policing Report.³⁰

Two examples of reforms that represent good public safety policies that reflect these values, policies the Council, nominee, and the broader Executive Branch should adopt, are provided below.

²⁸ Kranick, L. “Officer Overload: Are Too Many Responsibilities Compromising Officer Safety?” American Military University EDGE, February 14, 2017. Available at <https://amuedge.com/officer-overload-are-too-many-responsibilities-compromising-officer-safety/>.

²⁹ Rahr, S. and Rice, S. “From Warriors to Guardians: Recommitting American Police Culture to Democratic Ideals.” Office of Justice Programs, DOJ, April 2015. Available at <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/248654.pdf>.

³⁰ *Id.* note at 24.

A Broader, More Balanced Vision of Safety for Young People

The District should keep young people safe without reinforcing trauma, discrimination, and the school-to-prison pipeline. District leaders should focus on building a collection of non-police interventions to prevent conflicts involving students from escalating into safety threats and more effectively respond to safety threats when they do occur. To accomplish this, ACLU-D.C. strongly supports removing police officers from schools.

This vision of a more balanced approach to school safety is reflected in Bill 25-234, the “School Safety Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023.” The legislation, co-introduced by Councilmembers Parker, McDuffie, Bonds, Lewis George, Nadeau, and Robert White earlier this year, would, among other things, establish a fulltime School Safety Director for every DCPS public and charter school, as well as a School Safety Assistant Director for each high school. Local Education Agencies will work with schools—including educators, students, and parents—to make school safety plans that offer a range of interventions to address issues that can impact school safety.³¹

Years of experience across the country tell us that when schools rely on police officers as a primary response to safety needs, officers frequently become engaged in matters that do not rise to the level of needing police involvement—creating inappropriate contacts between students and the juvenile/criminal legal system.³² This can lead to students, particularly students of color and students with disabilities, feeling unsafe and surveilled at school.³³ Further, policing is often only a reactive response to incidents that occur on campus or in the community.

³¹ Bill 25-0234, the “School Safety Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023.” Introduced March 24, 2023. Available at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B25-0234>.

³² King, R. and Schindler, M. “A better path forward for criminal justice: Reconsidering police in schools,” the Brookings-AEI Working Group on Criminal Justice Reform, April 2021, available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-better-path-forward-for-criminal-justice-reconsidering-police-in-schools/>

³³ The D.C. Police Reform Commission discussed the disproportionate deployment of school police officers and other security resources in schools “populated mainly by students of color.” The Commission also highlighted the disproportionate harms experienced by students from marginalized groups as a result of school policing. The District of Columbia Police Reform Commission, “Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety: A Report of the DC Police Reform Commission.” Released April 1, 2021, pp. 67-69. Available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/police-reform-commission-full-report/>.

Students need interventions and programming to serve them before conflicts or challenges reach that point.

By recognizing that there are a range of options for anticipating and responding to safety concerns in our schools, the legislation is more likely to create safer school environments that reduce public safety threats and the dangers of over-policing. Further, by drawing on expertise from schools and communities in the safety planning process, the legislation recognizes that the most important sources of knowledge of how to keep students safe are at the schools themselves.

Broadening public safety conversations to include community-based institutions with deep historical knowledge and expertise is illustrative of the value-based, solutions-oriented approach that District leaders should be taking to public safety.

Responding to Mental Health Crises

Far too often, police are called to deal with incidents outside of their expertise or skillsets, failing to address the underlying problems and traumatizing (or re-traumatizing) residents in the process. Police participation in responses to people experiencing behavioral health crises is one example of this phenomenon. Besides being an inefficient use of police resources and jeopardizing police safety, police are a deeply problematic approach to serving people who need mental healthcare rather than criminal legal system intervention. The presence of armed officers when someone is experiencing a crisis can escalate already tense situations and make individuals who have had negative interactions with police feel unsafe.

The next Chief, the Council, and the Bowser Administration should embrace an approach to addressing mental health crises that relies primarily on non-police interventions and properly fund such interventions so that District residents can access them.

The ACLU-D.C., in coalition with a number of community-based organizations and community members, constructed the D.C. Crisis Response platform.³⁴ The platform outlines a comprehensive set of reforms to the District's system for responding to residents experiencing a mental health crisis. These reforms include bolstering the District's 988 system, expanding the availability of non-police responders when crisis occurs, and building out alternatives to hospitalization.

³⁴ The D.C. Crisis Response Coalition's recommendations are available at: <https://www.dccrisisresponse.org/>.

As with school safety reforms, these reforms recognize that in order to meet the needs of members of our communities, the District must take a policy approach that does not use police as primary responders. Instead, the District needs to draw on the expertise of professionals and community members better equipped to serve people in deeply sensitive moments. Ultimately, District leadership, including the new MPD Chief, need to understand the value of this approach.

Conclusion

The Council should ensure that the next Chief of MPD is committed to officer and Department accountability, prioritizing a comprehensive approach to public safety, and increasing legitimacy and public trust of MPD and its officers by respecting the communities they serve. Furthermore, we urge Council members to hold the new Chief accountable for these commitments as the next chapter in the Department's history unfolds.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**



**On the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith
to the Position of
Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department**

Testimony of
Pamela A. Smith
Acting Chief of Police

Before the
Committee on the Judiciary & Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Brooke Pinto, Chair

September 27, 2023
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 500
Washington, DC 20004

It is the mission of the Metropolitan Police Department to safeguard the District of Columbia and protect its residents and visitors with the highest regard for the sanctity of human life. We will strive at all times to accomplish our mission with a focus on service, integrity, and fairness by upholding our city's motto, Justitia Omnibus -- Justice for All.

Good afternoon, Chair Pinto, members and staff of the Committee, other Councilmembers, and everyone in our great city watching us today. I am Pamela A. Smith, Acting Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). I am truly humbled and honored to be here today to testify before you as Mayor Muriel Bowser's nominee to be the next Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department. I want to extend my appreciation to Mayor Bowser for her ongoing support. I approach this assignment with commitment and a strong sense of responsibility for leading the men and women of our great police department.

I would like to thank the members of the Council, all of whom made time to meet with me in August. I am confident that we will be able to work together to support public safety in the District of Columbia. Although we may not always immediately agree on the path, we share the same goal of a safe city for all.

Before I begin talking about the District and the Metropolitan Police Department, please allow me to start our conversation by sharing more about my journey that has led me to this point of my career. I am a native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where I spent my formative years as a young person. My experiences gave me an unwavering drive to push through and excel. As a 9-year-old, although I had no vision beyond the city limits of Pine Bluff, I noted in my diary that I wanted to grow up to be a police chief. I'm not sure I understood the magnitude of that journal entry at such a young age, but I have no doubt it planted a seed, giving me hope in the promise of dreams coming true and ultimately, believing that all things are possible.

I grew up in an environment where my father was addicted to drugs and my mother gave birth to her first child as a 16-year-old married teenager. By the time she was 21, she was divorced and left to raise three young children by herself. She was challenged with many issues that she experienced from her childhood, which made it difficult for her, at times, to create a household filled with love or compassion.

As a child, I didn't quite understand how to protect myself or my siblings from some of the physical abuse, but as a teenager, I found solace in attending church. I invited my siblings to attend with me and it was the one place we looked forward to going weekly, to find a place of refuge. It was where I had the opportunity to be of service to others and to not remain focused on the circumstances in my household. Maybe that's why law enforcement was so appealing to me as I carry that same protective spirit with me today as your acting Chief of Police.

I later realized that Pine Bluff at that time did not have a system to assist single mothers, so my mother did not have options for support. Due to her addiction, the Arkansas Department of Human Services eventually removed us from her care and placed us into a foster home. Despite



the fact that my mother was dealing with her own challenges, I would have preferred being home rather than in a foster care system that was not focused on the reunification of our family.

Nevertheless, one of my greatest moments of elation in my young life was having a loving family who saw something special in me and gave me a second chance at life – another chance to find hope in what seemed to me was a hopeless situation, a chance to prove to myself that I could overcome the adversities of life and fulfill those dreams that resonated in my mind. I will forever be thankful for the Thomas family who took me in and adopted me during my last years of high school and helped to provide a sense of normalcy and love in a home I craved for so long. That instilled in me a “pay it forward” gratitude that I apply in all that I do today. Why? Because they took a chance on me!

One of the highlights of my high school career was joining the track team. I was coached by the late, great Andrew Butler at Pine Bluff High School. Coach Butler helped shape me into the strategic thinker that I have been most of my adult life. He reassured me that despite what I was going through, running would help me to win in life. I didn’t receive a trophy if I didn’t win the race, but I was encouraged to train more, study harder, and look within if I was trying to win. He would always tell me not to look at others to accomplish my goals, but to always look within myself. I adopted his coaching style throughout my journey in college at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff where I was a member of Track and Field and was Three Time All-American in Track and Field. I have used the same techniques when approaching tasks or assignments that are very personal to me.

As I look back on those days, I gained many life lessons – how to find the positive in negative situations, how to face my fears, how to push through adversity and find a way to maintain emotional peace and some sense of normalcy in life, despite the things I could not control.

I’m also grateful that as an adult, I became more accepting of my birthparents. As I grew in my ministry, the Bible scripture to honor your parents convinced me to do just that. I’m grateful I was allowed many years to spend time with my mom and dad to reconcile our relationship before they passed away. Although, they are no longer here, I am confident they would be very proud of all of their children and how we embraced our circumstances to become productive people in today’s society.

These experiences have shaped and molded me into the woman you see in front of you today. So much of what happened in my life is what’s happening in many homes across the country today. As I have had the opportunity to visit with many young people in the last two months, I have seen that some of them are living stories similar to mine. I empathize with them and want to help them as others helped me as a young person. Everyone deserves a chance, and I want to be able to bring that compassion and spirit to my work as the Chief of Police.

Before committing myself to the profession of law enforcement, I spent time as a National Park Service seasonal ranger, a social worker who passionately focused on keeping kids out of the foster care system, a New York City Probation Officer, and a Federal Bureau of Prisons Corrections Officer before joining the ranks of the United States Park Police (USPP) in 1998.



Through service and law enforcement, I believed I found my passion due to my strong desire to serve and help guide others in the right direction. While working for Park Police, I had the opportunity to serve in four different jurisdictions: the District of Columbia, New York, Atlanta, and San Francisco. I worked with local crime fighting strategists in each of these jurisdictions. I rose through the ranks until I retired in 2022 as the first African American woman to serve as Chief of Police in the agency's 230-year history.

I'm proud and appreciative to have served 25 years in law enforcement with a decorated career. I achieved numerous commendations and awards. And I am honored and humbled to have the opportunity to continue this path forward if confirmed to lead MPD as the next Chief of Police.

I joined MPD in 2022 as the first Chief Equity Officer and was able to focus on learning and examining MPD's culture, build relationships across the department, and drive meaningful change, ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) remain a priority in the department. While I passionately and thoroughly enjoyed the DEI work, I was proud to answer the call and promotion to the Assistant Chief of Police, Homeland Security Bureau (HSB), where I led the operational and administrative functions of the Special Operations Division, Joint Strategic & Tactical Analysis Command Center, and the Office of Intelligence. This was a great opportunity to reconnect with so many of the local, state and federal partners I had previously collaborated with while at Park Police and an even more meaningful way to continue to strengthen those professional relationships.

* * * *

My past experience has led me to this great honor of being nominated to serve the District of Columbia as the next Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department. It was a privilege to join MPD in 2022, to work with its dedicated team of sworn officers and civilian professionals, in once again serving the great city of the District of Columbia. I come to this position ready to work with members of the community and our partners in non-profits, business, and government to help create a safer city for all that fulfills the promise of our values of equity and inclusion. And my fundamental perspective is that in this position, my role is not to jettison the ongoing good work in the Department, the government, and our neighborhoods, but to build on it and continue the progress, or to bring a new perspective that can help us move to the next level, together. Over the past two months, I have worked with the talented team at MPD to identify top priorities, launch new initiatives, and develop a strategic plan that is now available on our website at mpdc.dc.gov. I am pleased to highlight some of these priorities and initiatives here today.

I recognize that I have begun my tenure as the District is facing some critical public safety challenges. But that also means there is an opportunity to have a significant impact in our community and the Department. The most pressing concern that I have heard from community members since being nominated is the increase in robberies and carjackings and the fear that this creates. Homicides and shootings are also up this year, leading to a 36 percent increase in DC



Code index violent crime so far this year.¹ Much of this was driven by a sharp uptick this summer. While we have a lot of work to do to overcome the violence we have seen in our community this year, I believe the initiatives that I will brief you on today are helping to interrupt this cycle and make our city safer. Looking at the past 30 days compared to the prior 30 days, homicides are down 37 percent, carjackings are down 27 percent, and robberies are down 23 percent.²

In 2023, we have seen too many groups of youth and young adults committing strings of carjackings and robberies. From my first day as the Acting Chief of Police, I have been working with the MPD team and our partners to develop and deploy tactics that will help us to interrupt these patterns and make our streets safer for everyone in Washington. The week after my nomination, I launched the Violent Crime Suppression Initiative. Originally focused on just robberies and carjackings, the initiative focuses additional resources in the areas and at the times when our robberies, carjackings, and shootings occur. To ensure a high level of citywide coordination, each operation is led by a designated Incident Commander, and the Joint Operations Command Center is activated. This facilitates communication across police districts, ensuring that officers operating in one district have current information about emerging crime patterns in other districts.

As with many of MPD's initiatives, our public safety partners are also involved in and support this effort. During the operational period, MPD coordinates with federal law enforcement agencies, local university police departments, Metro transit police, and agencies from surrounding jurisdictions. This partnership is critical to MPD's ability to impact violent crime and increase safety for our communities.

In 2023, almost two-thirds of all arrests for carjackings have been youth under 18 years of age. Three-quarters of the carjackings have been committed while armed with a gun, increasing the risk to the community substantially. While the overwhelming majority of youth in the District have no involvement with crime, when some children as young as 12 are engaging in carjackings and other dangerous crimes, victimizing individuals and communities while increasing their own risks for later criminal involvement or victimization, it is clear that the current strategies are not an effective deterrent. MPD has continued to arrest juveniles for crimes when appropriate, and the Council and prosecutors have taken recent steps to try to address this concerning trend. In July, the Council enacted legislation to ensure that youth engaged in the most serious crimes may be detained pending trial – where they can receive appropriate supportive and rehabilitative services. A month ago, the US Attorney for the District of Columbia (USAO) reinforced that, when a 16 or 17-year-old is charged in a spree or pattern of armed robberies, prosecutors should strongly consider prosecuting that juvenile as an adult. So far in 2023, the USAO has charged nine juveniles as adults for armed robberies, including armed

¹ Homicide, sex abuse, assault with a dangerous weapon, and robbery, through September 24, as of September 25, 2023.

² Current 30 days (08/26/23 through 09/24/23) compared to prior 30 days (07/27/23 compared to 08/25/23).



carjackings. While these steps may be necessary, our preference is to work with youth to deter at-risk behavior.

As I highlighted earlier, my commitment to working with at-risk youth comes in part from my childhood, and also from my early professional career when I served as a social worker in New York. I know that we need to support at-risk youth and their families both before they get involved in delinquent or criminal behavior, as well as after any involvement in the juvenile justice system. In a new step to help reach some of the youth before they are involved in crime, earlier this month we partnered with the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) to address youth who are violating DC's juvenile curfew law. DYRS is operating a curfew center so that when police pick up a youth violating curfew who cannot be immediately turned over to their parents or guardian, the youth and their families can be assessed for services and support. This is critical when we are seeing groups of youth staying out late in specific areas where we have also seen pattern robberies and carjackings. To be clear, curfew violators are not arrested and do not have an arrest record. Our goal is to get youth off the street to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of or getting involved in violent crime. This month, MPD has picked up 28 youth violating curfew, of which half have been taken to DYRS.

I am committed to working with families, neighborhoods, and community and government partners to engage with youth to keep them safe and deter them from becoming involved with crime. To support this focus, I have realigned our resources within the Youth and Family Engagement Bureau to create the new School Safety and Community Engagement Division.³ The new division supports a safety strategy in and around our schools as well as community events and outreach initiatives designed for both youth and adults. The division will work to assist District families through meaningful engagement, facilitating connections to essential services and accessible resources, and extending community outreach efforts. We are also bringing Officer Friendly – a positive symbol of MPD for generations of Washingtonians – back to our schools and our neighborhoods.

Of course, having a community engagement division does not change the fact that our patrol officers are engaging with the community every day in every neighborhood. We know that we must be intentional in our efforts to build relationships and trust. Residents want to see officers not just at events, but on our streets. That is why I have directed all of our patrol districts to conduct at least one scheduled community walk each week, providing an opportunity for patrol leaders to hear directly from a variety of community members and to see neighborhoods streets through their eyes. Agency partners are also frequently joining our walks so they can follow up on issues needing attention, such as lighting, trees, and trash. This focus does not stop with community walks; patrol district leaders are working to spend more time in the neighborhoods with community.

³ The new School Safety & Community Engagement Division combines previously distinct units, including the School Safety Division, Youth Intervention and Prevention (YIP), Side by Side Band, and community affairs/events.



Not only does this build relationships, but it also reinforces to our officers the behavior and policing we want to see. About a quarter of our sworn members have been on the Department for less than six years; their perspective and experience has been shaped by COVID and large demonstrations, online meetings and January 6th. On the positive side, they have seen first-hand why MPD must always be prepared to support the city through major changes and emergencies. However, we must also ensure these officers see and understand the foundations in law enforcement, such as good community policing.

To help address communities facing more entrenched issues related to narcotics and disorder, we have launched Multiagency Police and Community Together, or MPACT. MPACT is a 3-phase effort where first MPD conducts enforcement initiatives in partnership with other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies. The second phase is engagement, which exemplifies the whole of government approach by bringing resources and services directly to the community. This second phase is critical to the sustainability of the effort. Lastly is celebration, through which the community can enjoy their neighborhood with their neighbors and public servants. These efforts have taken place around the city, including in Shaw, Minnesota Avenue, and Gallery Place / Chinatown.

Community members have also raised concerns about safer streets for all from speeding and reckless driving. To help address this, MPD is conducting Traffic Safety Compliance Checkpoints throughout the city at least twice a month. The high-visibility checkpoints focus on promoting safe driving, providing education, traffic violation enforcement, along with taking suspected impaired drivers and unsafe drivers off the road. During these checkpoints, MPD has stopped 800 vehicles, issued nearly 600 traffic tickets and 400 warning tickets, made 35 arrests, and given away 23 child car seats.

While these are concerns raised in many community meetings in the past two months, it is important to recognize that there is great diversity in our communities. Diversity in demographics, national origin, sexual orientation, ability, and others can contribute to a diversity of concerns and priorities. We are continually working make sure that the needs of all of our community members are met. For instance, in August and September we were pleased to host 60 residents in a Community Engagement Academy (CEA) conducted in Spanish. Each week during these periodic Academies, participants learn about a different aspect of MPD's work, including recruit training, patrol services, common policing scenarios, and use of force. To help serve our community members with limited English proficiency, this month we also launched a new process to ensure that parties involved in a police incident or traffic crash can request a translated report. And in 2024, we will develop refresher training on issues of importance to the LGBTQ+ community to be delivered in 2025 to ensure our members are well prepared to welcome and support the large numbers of visitors expected to travel to DC as we host World Pride 2025.

We are also committed to working to meet the needs of community members facing chronic or crisis behavioral health challenges. MPD is an active partner with the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), Fire and EMS, the Office of Unified Communications, and local hospitals to try



to reduce criminal involvement and unnecessary emergency room visits for these individuals. I have already met with Dr. Bazron to discuss our ongoing partnership with DBH. We are particularly looking forward to the launch of the DC Sobering and Stabilization Center and new DBH behavioral health professionals who will be joining our Co-Response Team, all expected to launch this fall. Just this morning we learned that MPD has been awarded a grant by the Department of Justice that will allow us to expand the co-response pilot into the Seventh District. We are also wrapping up our two-year project to ensure all members have been trained in either Mental Health First Aid (20 hours) or as Crisis Intervention Officers (40 hours).

We recognize that all of these efforts, while comprehensive, may not be sufficient to reverse longer trends in violent crimes, traffic safety, and community relationships. However, they illustrate how a willingness to continually work together to assess and try new approaches will be successful in the long run. That is what I am committed to bringing to MPD and our communities.

* * * *

In addition to focusing on pressing community needs, it is critical that MPD continue to address employee well-being. These are good investments by the city because public servants who are healthy and well can better serve and support the community. As you know, I came to MPD as its first Chief Equity Officer. I was able to listen to voices throughout the Department, sworn and civilian, of every rank and grade. Our work in the diversity, equity, and inclusion, or DEI, space continues, but we are making important strides forward. In that role, I recommended a fundamental restructuring of how the Department handles Equal Employment Opportunity, or EEO, issues. While all allegations are initially handled by the EEO office for intake and preliminary assessment of whether the allegation is an EEO issue, the investigation, if merited, will be handled by the Internal Affairs Division, a team that is experienced in thorough investigations. This change, which was implemented this summer, will help to ensure that every employee with concerns is heard and respected. In addition, based on my successful track record at Park Police in expanding the diversity in promotions and sworn and professional leadership, I will be examining ways to enhance this at MPD.

The Department is also focused on both the physical and mental health and wellness of our members. My experience in New York on 9/11 and its aftermath reinforced for me the importance of helping law enforcement to cope with the challenging social issues they see every day. Shortly after January 6th, then Chief Robert Contee conducted a public debrief with Dr. Beverly Anderson, the head of our Employee Assistance Program, to help destigmatize seeking support for mental wellness and encourage our members to do so as well. In October, I will host my own conversation with Dr. Anderson that will be broadcast live for MPD members. This reinforces the discussions I have consistently had with members about the importance of paying attention to their own wellness and mental health. In addition, under my leadership as the Chief Equity Officer, we expanded the Department's Chaplain Corps from one to six faith leaders from our communities volunteering to serve and support our members. We are also working to establish a peer support program.



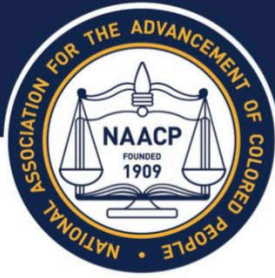
These internal initiatives align with the assessment of MPD organizational culture by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). Upon the request of then Chief Contee, PERF identified opportunities for improvements and suggested options to help address the issues raised. PERF recommended working to strengthen inclusivity in our organization, support the well-being of our members, and enhance our internal communications, which align with my priorities as well.

I know that these efforts will make MPD a better place for our employees to work and thrive. This is vital as we face the lowest staffing levels in 50 years, with challenges in both recruiting and retention, mirroring trends in law enforcement and the labor market generally across the nation. At Park Police, I was able to successfully expand recruitment by mobilizing a sworn recruitment team, which I am putting in place at MPD. We need to reinvigorate recruiting efforts that had pivoted to marketing and virtual platforms during the pandemic. I have added sworn members back to the recruiting team to support in person engagement with prospective recruits and to help with more specialized recruiting. We have also increased employee bonuses for referring individuals who successfully complete the Cadet Program (\$2,000) or recruit training (\$5,000). Direct recruitment by dedicated MPD employees is certainly one of the most effective ways to attract energized and committed new officers. Efforts this year are paying off, with attrition to date down 16 percent compared to last fiscal year, and 21 new officers starting this past Monday, the largest class in more than a year. This gives reason for some optimism in this critical area.

* * * *

In closing within and outside, thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. I am passionate about serving the city and the Department so that the District will be a safe and vibrant city for all residents and visitors. With my experiences both within and outside MPD, I bring a fresh perspective and energy to my work. I appreciate your consideration of my nomination and am happy to answer any questions you have.





NAACP *National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People*

Washington, DC Branch

1000 U Street, NW • Suite 100 • Washington, DC 20001

Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Chief Pamela A. Smith

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

TESTIMONY

Greetings, Chairman Pinto and members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. My name is Akosua Ali, President of the NAACP Washington, DC Branch and a Ward 7 resident. ***The NAACP supports the nomination and confirmation of Pamela Smith as Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.***

For over 114 years, the NAACP has championed the fight for racial justice, humane treatment and equality as the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization, since our organization was founded in 1909. The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic empowerment of African-Americans and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination. Since 1913, the Washington, DC NAACP Branch has led historic, fights advocating for the political, economic and cultural empowerment of Blacks people in District of Columbia. In 1914, our early members led a rally of over 10,000 people protesting segregation, equality and police brutality against Black men, women and children in Washington, DC. In the 1930s, the NAACP DC Branch testified providing photographic evidence of police brutality targeting Black men, women and children, supporting the firing of two police officers, so we have a long-history of advocating for public safety and criminal justice reform.

Today, the NAACP is a fierce advocate for criminal justice, public safety and policing reforms ensuring all Black lives' have the opportunity to live in safe, healthy communities, free of gun-violence and free of abusive policing tactics with failed accountability. When we, the NAACP, talk about civil rights and racial justice, we're talking about the safety, health and well-being of Black communities.

The NAACP DC Branch is on the record advocating for legislation and budget actions in support of health solutions for non-violent violent mental health, domestic violence and drug related offenses. NAACP is on the record advocating to increase behavioral healthcare, social works, violence interrupters and crisis intervention support services. NAACP is on the record advocating for MPD's EEO Department from under MPD to a separate, independent agency for oversight, final determination and adjudication. NAACP is on the record advocating for MPD's Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) from under MPD to a separate, independent non-enforcement agency for oversight, final determination and adjudication and ensuring the special position charged with overseeing IAB is unbiased and qualified to independently investigate and make determinations based on corruption and misconduct. The public and MPD employees that serve the public deserve safe communities and work environments free of abusive tactics, retaliation and corruption without accountability. To reform our justice system, we must ensure accountability and justice for the public and internal MPD employees reporting misconduct and injustice. We must ensure the public and MPD employees reporting racial injustice and misconduct are protected. Lastly, we must address the structural inequities that allow people with lower incomes to be penalized in ways that wealthy people aren't.

Acting Chief Pamela A. Smith has made historic strides towards achieving a more balanced police department supporting safer communities with a diverse and inclusive approach to rehabilitation, engagement and mental health. Pam Smith's resume and qualifications are unquestionable, but more importantly, her heart and passion to bring a unique approach to policing is critical. She is the leader for this city, at this time.

- Under her previous role as MPD's Chief Equity Officer, Pamela Smith championed an increased faith-based leader presence within MPD to helping MPD officers better cope with the physical, mental, social and emotional challenges and trauma of law enforcement. She expanded MPD's Chaplain Corps from one to six faith leaders to support MPD members.
- In her role as Acting Chief, she has demonstrated a commitment to working with at-risk youth before they are involved in crime, through a partnership with the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DYRS).
- Under her leadership, MPD has realigned resources within the Youth and Family Engagement Bureau to create the new School Safety and Community Engagement Division, supporting a safety strategies in and around schools, community events and outreach initiatives designed for both young individuals and adults.
- Under her leadership, MPD has initiated LGBTQ+ trainings ensuring MPD officers and employees are better equipped to support this LGBTQ+ community with a heightened, sensitivity towards supporting safe resolution to traumatic incidents.

- She continues to build upon Chief Contee's efforts to support the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of MPD officers through destigmatizing mental health and increasing access to support and resources for MPD officer's overall health and wellness.
- In addition, Pamela A. Smith has worked to create increased opportunities for the recruitment and promotion of Black women within MPD. Women in law-enforcement and gender diversity is critical to implementing various policing tactics towards addressing the complexities of public safety.

In closing, policing is a hard-job and the role of Chief of Police is a momentous challenge, but the NAACP is committed to being a partner to support Chief Smith in this role. The NAACP acknowledges the hard-work, sacrifice and service of the Metropolitan Police Department in helping to protect our democracy and helping to create safe communities for our families. We particularly want to thank you for your service on January 6, 2021, when 850 MPD members were on the ground at the U.S. Capitol and an additional 250 were in the area responding to the attacks. 65 MPD members were injured during the assault at the U.S. Capitol. And, we want to say thank you. We may not always agree on policing policies, tactics and solutions to achieve public safety, but this work is extremely important and we can only achieve safer communities when police and communities work together. We can never police ourselves out of crime. A holistic, comprehensive community and law enforcement approach will require intentional collaboration and I am confident we can achieve successful outcomes together.

On behalf of the Washington, DC Branch of the NAACP, we strongly urge your confirmation of Pamela A. Smith as the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. This is history in the making as we advance the first Black woman Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. This is her time, and this is her season to lead MPD into a new chapter promoting safer communities for Washingtonians. It is up to us as a community and leaders across the city to support her in her leadership towards safer communities. The NAACP is committed to supporting her leadership towards that end. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Akosua Ali
President
NAACP DC Branch

**COPE -CITIZENS ORGANIZED PATROL SHAW
EFFORTS (RED HATS) PATROL**

c/o "Mahdi" Leroy Thorpe 1704 5TH Street, NW

Washington, DC 20001

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September 27, 2023

To: Brooke Pinto
DC City Council
Chairperson, Judiciary Committee
Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC

**AL HAJJ MAHDI LEROY J. THORPE, JR., TESTIMONY ON
PAMELA A. SMITH CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR DC
POLICE CHIEF.**

Greetings Madam Chair and Committee Members. My name is Al Hajj Mahdi Leroy J. Thorpe, Jr., I am the President of the Shaw East Central Civic Association and Chairman of COPE Volunteer Red Hats Patrol which patrols in the Shaw and Chinatown neighborhoods of Ward 2.

I want to thank the Third District Police Commander James Boteler as well as former Assistant Chief Patrick Burke of the DC Police Foundation for their partnership with the COPE Red Hats Patrol in Shaw as we continue to eradicate crime. I also want to recognize the FBI Police for supporting our

Red Hats Patrol as we continue to clean up the 600 Block of I Street in Chinatown where property owners and businesses applauded our efforts.

I will not support the confirmation of Pamela A. Smith as the next DC Police Chief of the DC MPD. She only spent one year as the police chief with Park Police and had little support from its officers. During her tenure with the DC MPD, she did not have any duties overseeing police operations in the city nor did she know or have any contact with crime fighting activist such as myself and I have been fighting crime in DC since 1988 and I have worked closely with every DC MPD Police Chief since Isacc Fulwood and former DC MPD Police Chief Charles Ramsey was the most effective Chief DC has ever had and he is close friend of mine.

Violent crime in the city, gun running rings, incommoding prohibiting businesses to operate in Chinatown and prostitution in Chinatown has increased on the watch of Acting Chief Pamela A. Smith and let me add that none of the white shirts and rarely the First District Police Officers have acknowledged our Red Hats Patrol on duty in Chinatown which includes you as well Councilwoman Pinto as well as other DC Government elected or non-elected public officials and including Acting Police Chief Pamela A. Smith which is shameful and sends a message you all are blowing smoke regarding public safety.

In Closing, the liberal DC City Council public policy of legalizing marijuana has created a cesspool of degenerate sexual behavior among adults and youths in this city, as well as creating a generation of drug addicts and students going and leaving school high on dope as the junior and high school truancy and dropout rates increase particularly amongst Latino and Black youths. I like to add that sexually loose parents unmarried shacking up with men in their homes in front of their children and setting no curfews to be in the house and not getting involved with their children school actives and not monitoring whom their children friends and discipling their children for fowl profane language as travel to and from school and also woman who prohibits their children fathers from being a part of needed guidance in their lives have contributed to their children being unsupervised perpetrators and victims of this city under siege regarding violence.

Also Councilwoman Pinto your crime bill on search and frisk is racist towards Black people whom would often be profiled if your bill is passed.

Andrew Wiles

Over 200 of our neighbors, kids, and friends have been murdered in DC since the beginning of the 2023. The callous disregard for this horrifying time in DC and for the pain and suffering of DC citizens by this Council is truly disgusting. This Council must immediately change course away from its disastrous and obviously dangerous policies that have brought about Murder, Theft and Fear to our streets. Fund more police officers who are heroes trying to protect our love ones from Violence. Do Not give the responsibility of protecting my loved ones to a police chief with NO EXPERIENCE in combating violent crime. Punish the criminals that Kill, Rob and Beat your fellow citizens. Do It Now or Resign and let someone who actually cares about this community lead.

Beverly J. Anderson, Ph.D.
901 East Capitol St., SE
Washington, DC 20003

Brooke Pinto
Ward 2 Councilmember
Chairperson
Committee on the Judiciary & Public Safety

September 12, 2023

Dear Chairperson Pinto:

This letter is written in support of Acting Chief of Police Pamela Smith. As a resident and property owner, I am also president and CEO of Dr. Beverly Anderson Associates, Inc, a minority and woman-owned DC corporation established in 1989. My practice holds a contract with the DC Police Union to provide counseling and crisis intervention for the Metropolitan Police Department's officers, officials, and their significant others. The Metropolitan Police Employee Assistance Program (MPEAP) is entering its 36th year of operation. We provide the necessary services to mitigate the traumas that our officers experience on the job. A healthy police force is essential to care for the District's residents and visitors.

I became acquainted with Chief Smith after she assumed the position of "Chief Equity Officer" for the Department. As soon as she arrived, she was "boots on the ground" and visited the various districts and specialized units. Chief Smith visited us and listened intently about our work with the officers and their families. Chief Smith brings with her a proud legacy and many years of service to the U. S. Park Police-retiring as Chief. MPD has a long history of working with the Park Police routinely. They are an important MPD partner.

With unprecedented growth, recovery from the pandemic, and the turmoil created by the insurrection, we need a Chief of Police who has both the depth and breadth of knowledge that comes from leading a national police force like the U.S. Park Police.

Moreover, Chief Smith has a commitment to the citizens and youth of our city as an ordained minister. She has a passion to serve all citizens in all wards. Washington, DC has a tremendous faith-based community and I believe that it will take all the resources we have to restore law and order in a humane way for the long term.

I believe that Chief Smith is the inspirational leader that we need to make DC a safer place to live and work. Please accept this testimony in support of our next Chief of Police, Pamela Smith.

Respectfully,



Beverly J. Anderson, Ph.D.

Testimony of Bill Rice
Committee on the Judiciary, Brooke Pinto, chair
Re: Confirmation of Patricia Smith as MPD Chief
Hearing: Wednesday, September 27, 2023, Submitted: Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Good day. I am Bill Rice, a 40+ year DC resident from Ward 3, here to testify as an individual DC resident about the confirmation of Patricia Smith as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.

I have a longtime interest in the history of our city and of MPD. I am a member of the Friends of the DC Archives and work closely with the Archives Advisory Group, the body formed by the Council to “to focus and advocate for a new, state-of-the-art Archives” for our city. Under the leadership of District Secretary Kimberly Bassett and State Archivist Dr. Lopez Matthews, a new DC Archives is planned for the Van Ness campus of UDC.

MPD was created on August 6, 1861, with the direct involvement of President Lincoln and is one of the oldest DC Government agencies (maybe the oldest), with a long, rich history. The Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Memorial and Museum has created a fascinating online narrative, with a video introduction by retired MPD Lt. Nick Bruel <https://www.dcpolicememorial.org/historians-corner-washington-dc-police-history/>.

Before the Daly Building was closed, NBC4 reporter Mark Segraves and I had the pleasure of seeing some of the historic items with Lt. Bruel. The few photos below show a small sample of the collection, including uniforms, vehicles, batons, police blotters and priceless, nationally important documents. Perhaps the most valuable item, as Mark Segraves has reported, is the first written record of the Lincoln assassination, recorded in an MPD police notebook/blotter. I understand that much of the collection is in storage, but that a display is to be part of the space occupied by Chief Smith in the Barry Building/441 4th Street, NW.

While I have not had the opportunity to talk to Chief Smith about MPD’s history and the DC Police Memorial & Museum, I have brought my interest to the attention of her staff. I trust they will bring this matter to her attention, and she will read this testimony. With this in mind, I support Patricia Smith’s confirmation as MPD’s 32nd chief (see list at end of this submission).

Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Rice, 202-437-7787, ricebilldc@gmail.com, @ricebilldc





Police Chiefs of the MPD

First to current in ascending order. Click on each name for more info

1. William B. Webb - Sept. 1861 - Nov. 1864
2. A.C. Richards - Dec. 1864 - Jan. 1878
3. Thomas P. Morgan - Feb. 1878 - Nov. 1879
4. William G. Brock - Dec. 1879 - April 1883
5. William M. Dye - April 1883 - June 1886
6. Samuel H. Walker - July 1886 - Dec. 1886
7. William G. Moore - Dec. 1886 - July 1898
8. Richard Sylvester - July 1898 - April 1915
9. Raymond W. Pullman - April 1915 - Feb. 1920
10. Harry L. Gessford - April 1920 - Dec. 1921
11. Daniel Sullivan - Feb. 1922 - Oct. 1925
12. Edwin B. Hesse - Oct. 1925 - April 1929
13. Henry G. Pratt - April 1929 - Nov. 1931
14. Pelham D. Glassford - Nov. 1931 - Oct. 1932
15. Ernest W. Brown - Oct. 1932 - Nov. 1941
16. Edward J. Kelly - Nov. 1941 - Feb. 1946
17. Harvey G. Callahan - Feb. 1946 - June 1947
18. Robert J. Barrett - July 1947 - Nov. 1951
19. Robert V. Murray - Dec. 1951 - Dec. 1964
20. John B. Layton - Dec. 1964 - July 1969
21. Jerry V. Wilson - Aug. 1969 - Sept. 1974
22. Maurice J. Cullinane - Dec. 1974 - Jan. 1978
23. Burtell M. Jefferson - Jan. 1978 - June 1981
24. Maurice T. Turner, Jr. - July 1981 - July 1989
25. Issac Fulwood - July 1989 - Sept. 1992
26. Fred Thomas - Dec. 1992 - July 1995
27. Sonya Proctor (Interim) - Nov. 1997 - April 1998
28. Charles H. Ramsey - April 1998 - Dec. 2006
29. Cathy L. Lanier - Jan. 2007 - Sept. 2016
30. Peter Newsham - September 2016 - Dec. 2020
31. Robert J. Contee III - Jan 2021 -

Pamela Smith Confirmation Hearing Testimony by Brenda Lee Richardson of PSA 702 Outreach Committee

Good Day, Chairman Pinto and other distinguished Councilmembers. My name is Brenda Lee Richardson. I am a Ward 8 resident and the facilitator of PSA 702 Outreach Committee. I am honored to support the confirmation hearing for Pamela Smith as the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. Although Ward 8 is ravaged with crime and violence, our PSA is taking a more proactive approach to addressing the issue of gun violence. It is indeed a daunting endeavor.

The MPD Community Outreach team organize an incredible Paint 'N Sip for 80 children in our PSA from Garfield Hills, Woodland Terrace, Langston Lane, and Emmanuel Baptist Church summer camp. It was one of the most awe-inspiring events I have ever seen. The highlight of the momentous occasion was watching Chief Smith and Commander Makal of 7D play football with the children. We were blessed to see our new Police Chief on her third day on the job. I was impressed because she took the time to greet us and acknowledge us. It was not a mere photo op.

I am not interested in deploying the National Guard to save Ward 8 from the plunge into more devastating trauma, grief, and incarceration as a result of the growing gun violence. However, I do believe that we owe MPD a huge refund. When we defunded the police, we gave criminals more liberties than law abiding citizens. Especially those of us that live in disfavored communities and continue to live in an occupied state with these miscreants who unlawfully descend on our defenseless communities. This is quite disturbing.

Chief Smith has a tough job ahead of her. But with her experience at the U.S. Park Police and serving as an ordained minister, she is uniquely qualified to turn the tide that binds us with the uptick in gun violence and car jackings. Chief Smith will not be able to conquer this battle alone with MPD. She needs troops from the Health Department, Behavioral Health, 911, Recreation, DDOT and the people. The people must be more forthcoming and report the truth about what they see without fear of retribution from the assailant. The 911 operators must be kind to those of us who live in disfavored neighborhoods so we will report what we see more often anonymously rather than being judged for making the call. Loud music is a military tactic for prisoners of war. The loud music in residential areas cripples our mental well being and is the impetus for pop up parties and illicit behavior by

criminals who do not even live in our neighborhoods. We need more police on the street to protect us.

I will end with this note as I wholeheartedly support the confirmation hearing for Pamela Smith as the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. The constitution says, "WE THE PEOPLE" (not the rich or poor people; not the black or white people, but we the people) of the United States in order to form a more perfect union (not a divided union, but a more perfect union) establish justice (not crime, violence or insurrection, but justice) insure domestic tranquility, provide for common defence, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and prosperity.

Thank you.



Councilmember Brooke Pinto
Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Room 500
Washington, DC 20004

September 25, 2023

Councilmember Pinto and members of the Committee, I address you today as the President of the Washington Metropolitan Chapter of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (“NOBLE”). NOBLE was founded in September of 1976 during a three (3) day symposium to address crime in low-income urban areas. This event was co-sponsored by several organizations including sixty (60) top ranking black law enforcement executives which represented twenty-four (24) states and fifty (50) major cities, including the District of Columbia.

It should be noted that Past Chief of Police Burtell Jefferson, Past Assistant Chief Tilmon O’Bryant, and Past Counsel Vernon Gill of the Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) were among the leaders in attendance who would later become founding members of NOBLE.

During the three-day symposium, the group exchanged views about the high rate of crime in black urban communities and the socio-economic conditions that lead to crime and violence. Additionally, questions were raised regarding the fairness in the administration of justice, police community relations, the hiring and promotion of black police officers. The unfortunate reality is that these issues continue to plague our community today nearly forty (40) years later, on the heels of excessive use of force by law enforcement in incidents across the nation, a global pandemic, and political gridlock.

Over the past two decades, Chief Smith has dedicated her life to service through professional experiences in social work, corrections (including probation), and law enforcement. Service does not end there as she is also an ordained minister. Through her personal life experiences with parents who battled addiction, being placed in foster



care, and the associated traumas that followed coupled with her professional experiences, Chief Smith is the right person for this journey. Chief Smith possess the empathy and grace necessary to achieve greatness.

Chief Smith has forged relationships with local, federal, non-governmental, community, and faith-based partners resulting in the availability of additional resources to the community to address crime and economic strain. It has been reported that crime in the district has increased across the board over 30% and in the days following her nomination, Chief Smith has hit the ground running by developing a holistic approach with government, community, and faith-based leaders to combat the violence and provide a space for positive influences amongst the youth in community. We applaud Chief Smith for these initial efforts while also seeking the input of community during the community walks that have occurred in all seven districts.

Lastly, through her work as Chief Equity Officer, Chief Smith is committed to a culture within the MPD that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive for all. This commitment is the first step to addressing record lows in staffing and the overall morale of the agency.

As a member of the Washington Metro Chapter, Chief Smith embodies the mission of the NOBLE by “ensuring the equity of administration of justice in the provision of public service to all communities, and to serve as the conscience of law enforcement by being committed to justice by action.”

It is with this that the men and women of NOBLE support Pamela Smith as the next Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department for the District of Columbia, and respectfully request that you confirm her nomination so that she may continue her pursuit of ensuring that the “Nation’s Capital” is safe for citizens, businesses, and visitors.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian D. Harris

Brian Harris, President
Washington Metropolitan Chapter
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives

Testimony of Brian M. Mulholland
to the
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia
September 27, 2023

Chairperson Pinto and Members of the Council:

My name is Brian Mulholland, I am a resident of Ward 6.

We are a city in crisis.

I am here to address the #1 crisis in our city that has our citizens living in fear on a daily basis, made us the laughingstock of the Nation, and a city at war – crime.

While this council has addressed holding violent offenders over for trial and other measures, crime prevention has not been addressed. We gave a heroes farewell to the last chief of police who failed miserably.

I am here to ask you to not confirm Muriel Bowser's choice for Chief of Police. When crime is at a 20 year high, she chooses a park ranger when we need a Marine General at war.

- 199 murders this year, up 28%
- 2,552 robberies, up 65%
- 5,282 motor vehicle thefts, up 106%
- And the list goes on

And it hasn't decreased one iota since Pamela Smith has become acting chief.

Acting Chief Smith has no plan. She actually asked her commanders to devise one. No Cathy Lanier all-hand-on-deck, so successful she survived 3 mayors.

Police officers so tired from earning overtime they can't get out of the cruisers to walk a beat.

We are in a crisis. It is time that the Mayor and Council started acting like it. Your citizens have spoken: Enough!

Grandmothers killed by drive by shootings. Children who are not old enough to drive are stealing cars. This is the wild west!

Are you going to tell the spouses and parents and children and families and friends of the 199 people who lost their lives that Pamela Smith is the best you could find?

Are you going to tell them there are no more Cathy Lanier's or Tom Manger's or Bill Bratton's left in this country willing to roll up their sleeves in the Nation's Capital? Seriously, that's all you've got?

Now, I am sure Ms. Smith is a very nice person, I am sure she was well liked at the Park Police. I am sure it is nice that she is another "first" for the Mayor.

But we are a city in crisis. We deserve someone who has been in the tough battles, not patrolling picnic baskets. We need a proven leader, not an on the job trainee.

I urge you to deny the mayor this appointment and ask her to send you someone more qualified to handle a war.

We are at war. The bad guys are winning.

Thank you.

Catherine Schoenwetter

To Whom it May Concern,

As the Council considers the appointment of the new Cheief of Police, I would like to convey my concerns about the increase in crimes in my neighborhood. Armed muggings and car jackings are becoming alarmingly frequent and brazen! I would like the new police chief to prioritize:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
- returning to a policy of officers walking (and/or biking) the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups!
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime.

Thank you for your consideration.

Catherine

Charlotte Schwartz

I would like to register my deep concern with one of the first policies implemented by Pamela Smith in her tenure as interim chief: juvenile curfews.

I am an attorney and I have filed briefs on constitutional issues, including Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment issues, in federal courts of appeals across the country and in the United States Supreme Court. I am extremely concerned that the juvenile curfew policy is discriminatory. First of all, it is facially discriminatory: it only applies to children. Second, I strongly suspect, especially given what we have been told about where the policy will be 'especially' enforced, that it is racially discriminatory in effect.

I am disturbed by the notion that because some children commit crimes, all children are subject to what seems to be an arbitrary curfew. We also know that most violent crime is committed by men, but we would not countenance a curfew for all men.

Perhaps more so than the discriminatory and irrational nature of the policy on its face, I am extremely concerned that Chief Smith would implement a policy that we know does not work. Based on a study of a juvenile curfew in Washington D.C. from 2015, researchers from the University of Virginia found that, at best, the policy did nothing, and found evidence that it may have actually made the city *more dangerous*, corresponding with an increase in gunfire incidents of 69%. See, https://batten.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/2019-09/Carr_Doleac_Curfew_Gunfire_Sep2015.pdf.

Why would our Chief of Police implement a policy that *we know* does not work and may actually make us less safe? There are only two possible explanations: ignorance or politics. I do not believe Chief Smith is ignorant. That leaves politics. The only plausible explanation for this policy is to placate members of our community who are both fearful and influential by implementing a policy that sounds like it would help assuage their concerns, even though we know it won't actually make us safer.

I am deeply concerned that our chief of police would implement a policy for that reason. The idea that we are potentially *less safe* for the sake of the appearance of safety, especially through a policy that is facially discriminatory, is frankly unacceptable.

For these reasons, I hope my elected officials will oppose Chief Smith and any police chief that would make such a trade-off.

**GOOD MORNING COMMITTEE CHAIR AND ALL
COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

**MY NAME IS CHERITA WHITING I AM A NATIVE
WASHINGTONIAN. FOUNDER OF THE WARD 4
EDUCATION COUNCIL, FORMER CO-CHAIR OF
THE DC NAACP EDUCATION COMMITTEE, FORMER
VICE CHAIR OF ANC 4B AND FORMER CHAIR OF 4B
ANC.**

**I AM EXTREMELY HAPPY TO BE HERE TODAY TO
TESTIFY IN FULL SUPPORT AS WE MOVE
FORWARD WITH CONFIRMING OUR NEXT CHIEF
OF POLICE, PAMELA A. SMITH.**

**CHIEF SMITH IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE FIRST
WITH MPD WHO I DID NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOW
NOR HAD I WORKED WITH. WHEN I REACHED OUT
TO HER SHE WAS VERY RESPONSIVE FROM THE
START. WE EXCHANGED EMAILS AND HAD
SEVERAL PHONE CONVERSATIONS.**

**I SETUP A SERIES OF COMMUNITY PORCH
MEETINGS WITH WARD 4 RESIDENTS WHERE
CHIEF SMITH CAME AND SAT ON PORCHES AND
SPOKE TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, ALL AGES**

FROM YOUNGER, MIDDLE AGED TO SENIORS FOR HOURS. BY THE TIME WE WERE ON OUR FINAL PORCH WE HAD STANDING ROOM ONLY.

FOLKS FOLLOWED FROM THE PREVIOUS PORCHES TO CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATIONS. CHIEF SMITH SPOKE PERSONALLY TO EACH AND AT THE SAME TIME INCLUDED US ALL AS A GROUP.

ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY CHIEF SMITH RECEIVED CALLS ON A COUPLE OF VIOLENT HAPPENINGS ACROSS THE CITY. BUT SHE HANDLE A GROUP OF RESIDENTS WANTING ANSWERS AND HAVING MANY QUESTIONS. TO THE MULTIPLE CALLS COMING IN ON HER MULTIPLE PHONES.

WHAT I SAW ON THIS DAY WAS A CHIEF READY TO ROLL. LET'S BE CLEAR NONE OF US WANT OR LIKE THE SHOOTINGS AND KILLINGS GOING ON IN OUR CITY. TO BE FAIR THE CHIEF, NOR THE MAYOR, NOR ANY COUNCIL MEMBER THAT I KNOW OF HAS PULLED ANY OF THE TRIGGERS WE SEE AND HEAR ON THE NEWS DAILY. SO, WE AS RESIDENTS HAVE TO STOP BLAMING FOLKS AND TAKE BACK OUR OWN COMMUNITIES.

BUT LET ME ROLL IT BACK..... SOME OF YOU ON THIS COUNCIL DID THE MONKEY SEE MONKEY DO FROM OTHER CITIES AND STATES AND DEFUNDING OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT.....AND TRIED TO SCRAP OUR SRO'S FROM OUR SCHOOLS THAT YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE CHILDREN IN OR CHILDREN THAT HAVE TO ATTEND.....I DID SAY SOME OF YOU RIGHT.....

OK LET ME GET BACK TO THE CONFIRMATION.... BUT THE DEFUNDING OF MPD PLAYS A MAJOR PART OF THE SUCCESS FOR ANY CHIEF HERE IN DC BECAUSE THE CURRENT NUMBER OF OFFICERS IS 3,334 THAT SHE HAS TO WORK WITH AND PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR AND BEING JUST UNDER 700 LESS OF WHAT IS ACTUALLY NEEDED FOR OUR CITY

I CAN SAY NOT JUST IN WARD 4 DID I FACILITATE THE CHIEF MEETING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS BUT SHE ALSO PARTICIPAED IN A MEETING IN WARD 8 AT JOHNSON MIDDLE SCHOOL. SHE IS WILLING AND MAKING HERSELF AVAILABLE FOR THE RESIDENTS AND YOU CAN'T ASK FOR MORE THAN THAT.

I ALSO SHARED WITH HER CONCERNS FROM SOME OF THE NIGHTLIFE COMMUNITY WHO REACH OUT AND HIRE MPD FOR OVERTIME AND HOW THEY FELT ABOUT THE COST AND NOT REALLY FEELING LIKE THE OFFICERS WERE WORTH THE COST BECAUSE OF THEM JUST SITTING IN THEIR CARS AND NOT ACTUALLY PATROLLING. WELL THAT VERY SAME WEEK I MYSELF OBSERVED OFFICERS OUT OF THE CARS ENGAGING WITH RESIDENTS AND WAS ABLE TO SAY.... OK I SEE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTING EXACTLY WHAT THE CHIEF EXPECTS.

THE LAST FEMALE CHIEF WE HAD WAS MY DEAR FRIEND CHIEF LANIER AND SHE WAS ALWAYS SUPPORTIVE OF MY MANY IDEAS AROUND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WAYS TO CURB THIS FOR MEN AND WOMEN. AS A FORMER MEMBER OF THE DC COMMISSION ON WOMEN AND HAVING HELD SEVERAL FORUMS WITH THE FORMER CHIEF EDUCATING BOTH WOMEN AND MEN ON WHAT TO DO AND THE RESOURCES DC HAS TO OFFER, I AM CONFIDENT THAT OUR NEW CHIEF AS A WOMEN FEELS THE SAME AND WANTS TO DO

THE SAME AND CURB DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR ALL.

PLEASE DO THE RIGHT THING AND FULLY FUND DC MPD AS WELL AS OUR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS FOR OUR YOUTH. THE VERY SCHOOLS WITHOUT MAYBE THE SCHOOL YOU HAVE TO SEND YOUR CHILD TO.

SO AGAIN, I AM IN FULL SUPORT OF CONFIRMING PAMELA A. SMITH AS POLICE CHIEF TO MY HOMETOWN DC.

CHERITA WHITING

DISTRICT of COLUMBIA
ASSOCIATION OF
BEVERAGE ALCOHOL
WHOLESALEERS

September 28, 2023

*"The matter of the nomination of Pamela A. Smith to be the Chief of the
Metropolitan Police Department"*

Written Statement of

*Risa Hirao, President and General Counsel
District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers*

Submitted for the Record to the Committee on Judiciary & Public Safety

My name is Risa Hirao. I submit my written statement in my role as the President and General Counsel of the District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesaler ("DCABAW"). Founded in 1985, DCABAW is the local industry association for the District's beer, wine and spirits distributors. All of our members operate in D.C. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments on the nomination of Pamela A. Smith as the next chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.

The District's wholesalers are job creators, accounting for hundreds of good, local jobs. These jobs undergird key District industries and businesses including restaurants, bars, hotels, supermarkets, and local shops.

Wholesalers support the District's bottom line by effectively collecting and generating millions in District taxes every year. Wholesalers form the lynchpin of the District's alcohol beverage regulation system. D.C.'s three-tier system of independent manufacturers, distributors and retailers allows our modern, innovative alcoholic beverage industry to exist.

It delivers the greatest consumer choice, provides an efficient and auditable excise tax collection system, and protects DC residents by ensuring that alcohol is sourced by verified and licensed businesses. Public health and safety are essential functions of alcohol regulation, and the District's wholesalers are proud and determined to do our part.

In the wake of the pandemic, how people live, dine, and congregate continue to be impacted. The downtown workforce remains a fraction of what it was prior to the pandemic. The hospitality industry is in a delicate position.

The recent increase in crime is a potentially devastating dynamic amidst these existing challenges.

Our wholesalers have had product stolen from their vehicles. We received reports of threats made against drivers and stolen vehicles (still unrecovered to this day) of sales staff visiting customers in DC. Our Retail partners have been attacked, multiple times, in their stores, and experience theft nearly every single day.

Add to this the impact of public perceptions of safety reducing the willingness of local residents to go out and patronize local restaurants and shops, the impact of



WINEBOW
FINE WINE • SPIRITS

crime on the beverage alcohol industry, wholesalers, retailers, and hospitality partners is substantial and growing.

We urge Chief Smith, MPD, and the Council to fully engage every tool in your collective toolkits to get our arms around this crime crisis. We also urge you to proactively engage with businesses and employers as partners in your efforts.

Residents need to feel safe as they go about their lives. Businesses need to feel confident that our public safety agencies are creating a safe environment for our employees and families. All of us have a responsibility to play our part to make the District the vibrant and safe city it can be, the city it has been.

We look forward to working with Chief Smith to do just that.

Thank you.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION OF BEVERAGE ALCOHOL
WHOLESALEERS

Risa Hirao
President and General Counsel

DIANE c GROOMES – RETIRED METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT; RESIDENT OF WASHINGTON DC

GOOD afternoon to the honorable councilmembers.... I am writing to convey my strong support for the nomination of Pam Smith to be appointed to be Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department of Washington DC.

Interim Chief Pam Smith has an outstanding record of being an accomplished, focused and dedicated law enforcement executive ...she previously served as the Chief of Police for the US Park Police and served that agency for over two decades with a stellar performance. She has recently served as an executive member with the Metropolitan Police Department as the Chief Equity officer as well as the Assistant Chief of Police for Homeland Security under Chief Robert Contee...and currently has been appointed by our distinguished Mayor to lead the Metropolitan Police Department due to her extraordinary performance and dedication to the Department.

Chief Smith comes at a time where the city has vast challenges with gun violence, a rise in crime, and a loss of critical manpower (staffing challenges)....she has accepted this challenge and since her appointment has tirelessly charged forward to combat these challenges and most of all has been responsive to the community by being visible and presentnot only during times of crisis but she has attended community walks, vigils, events, meetings and celebrations.

I did not have the opportunity to work with her during my tenure at MPD; however, met her briefly while she was attending the BEAT the STREET event at the SW Waterfront-Wharf. She immediately offered her support to public safety efforts and vision at the Wharf but took the time to meet with me one on one to discuss the recent public safety concerns that our area has been experiencing(armed robberies and juvenile issues).

I respect her vision and passion that she has for not only for the community (which is paramount) but also for her members of the Department. I believe she is committed to making a difference and will also be able to build upon the success of the Department.

She clearly has the skills, mindset, work ethic, spiritual and professional commitment to make the right decisions and tough decisions that need to be made in such a position. I believe she possesses the qualities to be our Chief of Police in this special city and strongly support her appointment.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION**



**Public Hearing on
Pamela A. Smith's Confirmation**

**Testimony of
Dr. Christina Grant
State Superintendent of Education
Office of the State Superintendent of Education**

**Before the
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
The Honorable Brooke Pinto, Chairperson**

September 27, 2023
11:00 AM
Council of the District of Columbia

Good morning, Chairperson Pinto, members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, and staff. My name is Dr. Christina Grant, and I am the State Superintendent of Education for the District of Columbia. I am pleased to submit written testimony in support of Pamela A. Smith's confirmation as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.

As the State Superintendent of Education, student safety and wellbeing are among my top priorities, along with student academic growth and performance. An effective, accountable police force helps build safe neighborhoods and confident, focused young people. When students feel secure in their safety, they can better focus on their studies and open themselves up to their limitless potential. Acting Chief Smith has the experience and character to lead the District's police force and the District to a brighter future.

Character

Character matters. As national news demonstrates, an Ivy League education does not inure a person from poor decisions, corruption, or misdeeds; rather, strong character steels a person to do what is right over what is easy. As State Superintendent of Education, I have gotten to know Acting Chief Smith. She has proactively reached out to me numerous times because she genuinely cares about providing DC's young people a safe environment to grow up in, both in and out of school. Her heart is in the right place because she knows from personal experience what it means to grow up in difficult circumstances and overcome obstacles to achieve success in school and life. Acting Chief Smith overcame a difficult childhood with determination and grit – invaluable character traits for someone taking on the demanding job of chief of police. If confirmed, Acting Chief Smith's resiliency, empathy, and strength of character will shine through to show DC's youth that all things are possible and provide our city's officers an example of the benefits of a straight and narrow pathway to greater success.

Experience

Acting Chief Smith has the necessary experience to lead the District's Metropolitan Police Department at this time. With over 25 years in law enforcement, Acting Chief. Smith has steadily risen in the ranks from patrol officer to sergeant, lieutenant, captain, major, and deputy chief. She has served in a variety of roles, including training officers, leading patrols, handling disciplinary matters, and leading the United States' Park Police. She knows DC and the Metropolitan Police Department, having served as the department's chief equity officer and assistant chief in charge of homeland security.

Before Acting Chief Smith made the transition to policing, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in education and served youth as a social worker and park ranger. After turning to law enforcement, she continued to serve young people as a youth pastor. With Acting Chief Smith's confirmation as chief of police, the District will elevate the focus on education and parenting as a crime-prevention tool. While unusual, her background in education will be a great asset to the city.

Furthermore, she will be the first Black woman to lead the department in our city's long history. Representation matters. In education, national research shows that Black students, on average, have better attendance, fewer disciplinary issues, and better academic performance when they have access to Black teachers. How our children and community view the police is equally important, as we must strengthen the bonds between the community and our police force to improve policing and make our communities safe for all residents. The confirmation of Acting Chief Smith will be an important step to re-envisioning policing in the eyes of our youth.

With these experiences to guide her, Acting Chief Smith has committed to drive down increasing crime rates by:

- Targeting the deployment of officers to areas affected by most affected by crime;
- Engaging in long-term investigations focused on the most violent people; and
- Leveraging a whole-of-government approach to best use police officers, recruit new officers, and deter young people from a turn to criminality.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I genuinely appreciate Acting Chief Smith's communication with my office. It is clear that she values a productive dialogue on how to best engage our youth and keep them on pathways to success. With a background in education, she will focus on making sure that our children are safe and improving how youth view police in DC. I urge councilmembers to confirm Acting Chief Smith as DC's next chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.

Elizabeth Costanzo

I'm concerned about the increase in crimes including armed robberies and carjackings in my neighborhood. I want the new police chief to prioritize:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
- returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime

Erin Taylor

I live on Capitol Hill and am very concerned by the dramatic increase in violent crime in my neighborhood, including multiple assaults, car jackings, armed robbery, and shootings.

I would like the new police chief to:

- learn about my neighborhood and speak with neighbors.
- reestablish police walking neighborhoods and interacting with neighbors to build trust.
- establish programs that help keep young people from engaging in violence and crime.
- hold people accountable for the crimes they commit.

respectfully,

erin taylor



3901 Argyle Terrace, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
www.dccogc.org

Testimony of
Fritz Mulhauser

Before the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia

Public Roundtable on PR25-0384 - Nomination of Pamela A. Smith
to be the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department –

September 27, 2023

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify regarding the appointment of the District's next police chief. I am a member of the Coalition board and a Ward 6 resident.

Most of the witnesses today will talk about crime — that the crime rate is rising; that crime in D.C. is getting much more violent; or that the MPD is out-of-touch with the communities it is sworn to serve.

We want to talk to you about MPD's concerted efforts, under the past three chiefs, to avoid accountability to District residents for bad policing practices, as well as for bad acts of individual officers. Because secrecy and lack of accountability are major contributors to community distrust of the department, we hope you will question Interim Chief Smith about specific steps she will take to ensure that the MPD follows D.C. transparency laws, court decisions and Office of Open Government (OOG) advice. Please ask how she will tear down the culture of secrecy in MPD, and demand a commitment that under her leadership the department will, in fact, become more transparent. FOIA processing generally (promptness, accuracy) needs improvement as well.¹

D.C. residents and public interest organizations, including the Open Government Coalition, have repeatedly challenged the MPD's refusal to disclose records, electronic recordings and body-worn camera (BWC) videos under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), D.C. Code § 2-531, *et seq.* In denying requests, MPD has invoked an expansive, legally unsupported notion of personal privacy,

¹ Problems include: **Delay:** Of almost 2,000 requests MPD processed (nearly 20 percent of the citywide total), about 40 percent were late, and over 500 were very late (taking more than 26 days). **End of year backlog:** MPD began the year with over 200 and ended with over 300 (average wait 225 days); only one agency had more. **Denials:** Over 70 percent of requests got adverse MPD responses (denied in whole or part or no records found). The Office of Open Government [held](#) in 2020 that MPD denies chunks of records (called redaction) due to an incorrect reading of the law of privacy, and the Open Government Coalition cited fresh examples in oversight [testimony](#) this year. **Appeals:** Disappointed requesters appealed more denials by MPD than by any other agency, and the mayor reversed more decisions by MPD than by any other. **Litigation:** Of 29 active FOIA lawsuits in Superior Court, half were challenging MPD decisions. See 2022 FOIA reports by the [mayor](#) and [attorney general](#).

has applied the law enforcement exemption to withhold records beyond its scope, and has slow-walked requests submitted by journalists and lawyers deemed hostile by department executives.

I. MPD HAS CIRCUMVENTED TRANSPARENCY LEGISLATION

In the past two years, the Council has twice enacted legislation intended to compel FOIA compliance, and in each instance MPD aggressively sought to circumvent the spirit, if not the letter of the law.

In response to multiple complaints arising from police-involved deaths, the Council enacted emergency legislation in 2021 requiring MPD to give victims, decedents' families and the Council access to BWC videos and other records of the incidents, and to make the videos public. In response, the MPD made public heavily redacted video clips — not complete videos — from use-of-force and officer-involved shooting incidents. The clips appeared as one or two panes in “Community Briefings” that appeared to portray a narrative most favorable to the MPD.

That was not what the Council intended and, to overcome MPD's resistance, in the permanent legislation that took effect a few months ago, it left no doubt that the statute requires release of videos from all officers on the scene. *Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Act of 2022* (Police Reform Act), Bill 24-0320. The law aimed to

[r]equire the public disclosure of the names of all subject officers (the officers who committed the acts at issue). Further, ... the release should include the BWC recordings of all officers (not just subject officers) that capture any part of the events leading up to the incident, during the officer-involved death or serious use of force, and after the incident.

Committee [Report](#) (Nov. 30, 2022), 18 (on Police Reform Commission recommendations that were accepted, Sec. 103 of the bill, D.C. Code § 5-116.33).

The Police Reform Act includes provisions making public officer disciplinary records by ending blanket privacy denials (Sec. 134). But, since the law became effective, MPD has continued its denials, now because the Council did not appropriate funds for added work. The MPD thus ignores that their own prior misinterpretation of law required the corrective legislation, instead denying requests until the Council acquiesces in its vastly overstated estimate of staffing needs and budgets for an added lawyer and six added FOIA staff to do what should have been done all along.

II. MPD HAS IGNORED COURT RULINGS AND OOG OPINIONS

Since it started using body cams in 2015, the MPD has strenuously resisted public disclosure of BWC video. When it cannot deny a request, the department heavily redacts videos eventually disclosed, including blurring the faces and badges of all uniformed police and emergency personnel. In some instances, it demanded exorbitant fees for redaction. To this day, MPD claims it can obliterate officers' faces from BWC videos to protect their privacy.

MPD disregards this committee's finding that:

officers' faces should not be redacted from BWC footage. Police officers have tremendous power over members of the public.... They can stop and search people, make arrests, and are authorized to carry firearms and, when justified, use deadly force. The unique powers

and functions of police officers ... require a robust system of oversight to ensure they are not abused or misused.

Committee [Report](#), 19.

MPD refuses to follow the OOG's interpretation of the FOI Act's privacy exemption² expressed in at least two advisory opinions since 2020, that uniformed officers have no protectable privacy interest in BWC videos.³ Finally, it ignores the D.C. Court of Appeals holding earlier this year that "there is ... a growing consensus of circuit courts holding that there is a First Amendment right to record police activity in public, ... which negates officers' reasonable expectation of privacy in their interactions with the public...." *Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) v. District of Columbia*, 290 A.3^d 29, 45 (D.C. 2023) (citations and internal quotations omitted).

III. MPD HAS BEEN SUED FOR CREATING A FOIA REQUESTER HIT LIST

Last year, Amy Phillips, a D.C. defense attorney, accused the MPD in a suit filed in federal court of maintaining a list of FOIA requesters it deems to be hostile to the Department. In a sworn declaration, Vendette Parker, a former MPD FOIA Officer, said that at the direction of senior MPD officials, she "delayed, denied, or improperly altered" 20 requests "originating from news reporters or people known to be critical of the department, or those containing requests for information with the potential to embarrass the department." *Phillips v. D.C.*, No. 22-CV-277, Doc. No. 1, Exh. A (D.D.C. filed Feb. 2, 2022). *See, also*, <https://dcogc.org/blog/d-c-police-officials-manipulated-foia-to-avoid-embarrassment-says-new-lawsuit>

To succeed, any effort to end MPD's culture of secrecy and its scofflaw approach to FOIA must come from the top. Therefore, we urge this committee, and the full Council when it meets to confirm Interim Chief Smith, to demand that she direct MPD's general counsel and FOIA officer to abandon their obstructionist practices, follow the law, and improve all aspects of public access to police records under FOIA.

We look forward to working with this committee to ensure that the MPD and other public safety agencies operate transparently. Public accountability is essential to improve public trust. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Formed in March 2009, the D.C. Open Government Coalition seeks to enhance public access to government information and transparency of government operations of the District. We believe transparency promotes civic engagement and is critical to a responsive and accountable government. We strive to improve the processes by which the public gains access to government records and proceedings, and to educate the public and government officials about the principles and benefits of open government.

For additional information, I can be reached at 202-550-4131.

² D.C. Code § 2-534(a)(2).

³ [Metropolitan Police Department—Body-Worn Camera Footage Under the Freedom of Information Act of 1976, # OOG-2023-002_AO, Sept. 15, 2023; MPD District of Columbia Freedom of Information Act Compliance, OOG-002-10.1.19-AO.](#)

DC Police Union

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September 27, 2023

Testimony of DC Police Union
On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the
Metropolitan Police Department

Good afternoon Chairperson, Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify. As the Chairman of the D.C. Police Union, I speak on behalf of approximately 3,000 sworn police officers, detectives and sergeants who serve this community as members of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

When Chief Contee announced his retirement from MPD several months ago, our membership immediately gravitated to then Assistant Chief Pamela Smith as the ideal replacement.

While Chief Smith did not begin her career with the Metropolitan Police Department, she has an illustrious tenure as a law enforcement officer with the United States Park Police. While serving with the Park Police, Chief Smith served in major city field offices across the United States including San Francisco, New York, and Washington, DC, rising through the ranks to become Chief of Police for the United States Park Police in 2021. This robust resume gives Chief Smith the depth and experience needed to lead an organization like the MPD.

Over her decades of experience, Chief Smith has developed an effective style of leadership that shows a genuine ability to listen to and *hear* the rank-and-file members. Chief Smith has already shown that she is able to find meaningful discourse in the labor-management relationship. She also possesses the ability to engage the public in a productive manner and build relationships within the community to reduce crime and develop trust, while ensuring the safety and well-being of our members.

The Union believes that Chief Smith possesses the leadership skills to successfully manage the many difficult issues facing the MPD and the city in a way that will bring safety and prosperity to all communities in the District.

One of the most important aspects of the labor-management relationship is to enable the agency to hire and retain the best possible employees, while combatting attrition. A well-trained workforce is the key to providing the best customer service while also policing communities responsibly. Even though there are many voices in the current debate on policing in society, I

believe there is one thing most agree on: we need to focus on improving our police department. We can only do that with the best candidates and the best employees.

The Union is highly optimistic that our relationship with Chief Smith will result in positive outcomes for the department and for our city, particularly in our most vulnerable neighborhoods.

The DC Police Union expresses support for Chief Pamela Smith to assume the position of Chief of Police and we support her confirmation without reservation.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to provide additional information at the Committee's request.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory Pemberton', is written over a horizontal line.

Greggory Pemberton
Chairman
D.C. Police Union

J. Thomas Manger - United States Capitol Police

On behalf of the United States Capitol Police Department, I am writing to convey my strong support for the nomination of Pam Smith to be appointed as Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, D.C (MPD.) Chief Smith has a long relationship with the City and its residents and has a reputation as a dedicated public servant. Her previous experience as the Chief of the United States Park Police as well as her time with MPD make her uniquely qualified to assume the responsibilities and the challenges of leading the City's police department.

Chief Smith comes to the job with key relationships already forged. She is well known and respected in the region and has worked cooperatively with every law enforcement agency operating in the District of Columbia. Her relationships with Federal, State and Local agencies will ensure mutual cooperation with partner organizations. This will also work to create and maintain efforts that will help MPD keep the City safe.

For a police chief to be successful, they need to possess a devotion to public service, a strong work ethic, and the courage and integrity to make the right decisions for the right reasons. Chief Smith has all of these qualities and I strongly support her appointment as the next MPD Chief.

J.P. Szymkowicz

Testimony of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner J.P. Szymkowicz (3D07 – Foxhall) in Support of Nomination of Pamela Smith as Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department:

My name is J.P. Szymkowicz. I am the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 3D07, which encompasses the Foxhall area of the District of Columbia. I testify here today in my capacity as an individual ANC Commissioner and not on behalf of ANC 3D as a whole. Thank you, Councilmember Pinto, for providing me the opportunity to speak today.

I strongly support Mayor Bowser's nomination of Pamela Smith to become the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department and commend the Mayor for her decision.

Since there are many people testifying today, I want to highlight just a few issues that lead to the inescapable conclusion that Ms. Smith is the right person for this important job.

The District of Columbia is unique in American localities as it houses both regular citizens and the Government of the United States. Therefore, it is essential for any Police Chief to have extensive experience dealing with the Federal Bureaucracy since the Metropolitan Police Department must work closely with our Federal partners in protecting the United States Capitol, the White House, and all of the Federal offices and foreign embassies in our great city.

As the former Chief of the United States Park Police in the District of Columbia and as a Senior Instructor at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Ms. Smith has the experience in dealing with the Federal Bureaucracy that is essential to the job that the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department faces.

Another aspect of Ms. Smith's background that makes her an excellent candidate for this role is that she has served at all levels of a police department from Sergeant, to Lieutenant, to Captain, to Major to Deputy Chief and finally to Chief. This background will allow her to relate to all of the officers under her command.

Finally, as MPD's Chief Equity Officer, Ms. Smith knows firsthand how our policing must balance in the civil rights of suspects with the needs of our victims, and how important it is to treat everyone who comes in contact with police officers with respect and dignity.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of Ms. Smith's nomination.

James Costello

DC Council:

I am very concerned about the increasing rate of robberies, carjacking, personal assaults, shoplifting and public disorder that is occurring in my neighborhood of Capitol Hill and across the city. As a 40+ years resident of the District, I have seen difficult times before where crime increased but the city had a plan to combat this crime and made progress in substantially reducing it. I know that addressing this crime will not be easy or a quick fix but I am not confident that the city has a plan this time to get this crime under control. We need police officers walking the beat and riding bikes to interact with the community and provide some assurance to residents. While I dismay seeing young people getting caught up in the criminal justice system, there has to be consequences when they commit a crime against their community. We also need to invest in improving street lighting around the city and installing more cameras to capture evidence when something happens. Residential cameras are helpful, but we should be mirroring how London uses and deploy cameras in the public domain.

James Irby

I'm concerned about the increase in crimes like armed robberies and carjackings in my neighborhood. I want the new police chief to prioritize:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
- returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime

As a family with two young children, we are seriously contemplating whether staying in this city is the right thing for our future. This decision is solely based on whether DC can reduce crime rates. I urge the committee to elect a police chief that has innovative and effective solutions to the crime in our city, and can clearly outline how they will implement these changes, measure the results, and commit to a timeline on when we should see change.

Jean-Marc Bernard

I'm extremely concerned about and frankly shocked by the increase in crimes like armed robberies and carjackings in my neighborhood. I expect the new police chief to have extensive experience in high crime contexts, which I don't see in the profile of the current acting chief. I want the new police chief to prioritize:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods in particular foot patrols and bike patrols
- returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- focus on crime prevention
- an increase coordination between MPD and social services to increase crime prevention and protect children
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime.

Joanne Stratton Tate

I'm a senior citizen who has felt very safe in our city--even at night-- until events of recent months. We've seen an increase in petty crimes in my neighborhood but what's really troubling is the common place of car jackings and armed robberies. I want the new police chief to be someone with extensive experience and demonstrated success leading a department in a city like ours.

I expect the chief to prioritize and know how to lead for success in these areas:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods--even a policy that calls for walking/biking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, set up cameras, clean up vacant lots thus making our pathways safer
- advocacy for policies and programs that help prevent our city's children from becoming involved in violence and crime.

Thank you for your careful consideration of my concerns as the next chief is chosen.



3D CAC

THIRD DISTRICT MPD CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Brooke Pinto, Chair

Hearing Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

Room 500, John A. Wilson Building

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20004

Testimony Submission: On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

Organizational Live Testimony: Karen Gaal, Chairwoman, Third District MPD Citizen's Advisory Council

Background:

The Third Metropolitan Police Department District is in the Northwest quadrant of Washington, DC, near the center of the city. Though primarily a residential district, it also contains several business and commercial areas that attract many non-resident visitors to the area. The Third District covers Ward 1, Ward 2 and sections of Ward 5 and Ward 6 with an estimate of over 108k residents, numerous community associations and 12 Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

The District is home to some of the District of Columbia's best-known neighborhoods, including Howard University, Adams Morgan, U Street (the former Black Broadway), Shaw, Mid City, Columbia Heights,

MONTHLY MEETING LOCATION

3RD DISTRICT MPD STATION

1620 V STREET, NW

WASHINGTON, DC 20009

202-854-1620

CHAIR@3DCAC.ORG

WWW.3DCAC.ORG

3DCACDC@GMAIL.COM FOR GENERAL INFORMATION

INSTAGRAM:@3DCAC



THIRD DISTRICT MPD CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

Parkview, Dupont Circle, Farragut North, Kalorama, Logan Circle and Mt. Pleasant. The Third District is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity.

3D CAC is a Washington, DC Public Safety Community Organization. 3D CAC is for Community Growth, Community Connections, and Community Responsibility.

We actively engage in the community on all levels by putting policies into practice and working with all levels of the District government through building relationships, finding common ground with public safety leadership, leading by example, and modeling innovative programs and initiatives for the diverse population in the Third MPD District.

We are also a non-profit program provider of public safety and social betterment programs that helps navigate and improve outcomes for community members in enriching ways. 3D CAC supports the 3rd District Washington Metropolitan Police Department in social betterment, public safety, youth and community outreach programs, as well as officer morale initiatives. 3D CAC supports MPD through, active leadership, education, sponsorship, fundraising, philanthropic volunteerism and proactive preemptive programs and community engagement activities and events with 3D MPD and other community organizations.

3D CAC's goal is to make our city a safer place for all of us to live, work, worship and visit. We are strong advocates that believe that public safety can be better. We believe that the benefits of an advanced

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sustainable, comprehensive approach to public safety is possible in the District of Columbia with city-wide environmental changes, technology, supportive legislation and accountability.

Our Support Of Chief Smith

Chief Pamela Smith has demonstrated exemplary leadership throughout her career in law enforcement. Her commitment to community policing principles and building strong relationships between the MPD and the residents it serves is truly commendable.

Under her leadership, the Metropolitan Police Department has seen notable improvements in transparency, accountability, and community engagement.

We Support Chief Pamela A. Smith because she is focused on advancing a comprehensive approach to violent crime prevention and reduction in the District of Columbia. She has provided innovative approaches in her leadership such as mandating that executive level MPD command staff actively provide action plans to address persistent public safety problems and be present on the streets with other MPD Officers. With this approach, We have witnessed at the beginning of this measure within the 1st week of Chief Pamela A Smith's leadership and after suffering four consecutive months of rising crime rates, DC finally got some relief with a 7% decrease in reported crimes in August.

Unfortunately, homicides were higher in August than any previous month this year and only time will tell if overall crime will continue to

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THIRD DISTRICT MPD CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

decrease. We feel hopeful under Chief Smith's leadership because she's starting off on the right path.

Under Chief Smith's leadership MPD has a "Robbery Suppression Initiative" and the results are showing that it works.

- Property crime which is 84% of all crimes in DC was down 3% in August.
- Violent crime fell 24% in August, with similar decreases in violent crimes both with and without guns.

These are tough obstacles that we feel are going to continue to trend downward as the Chief Smith continues.

Chief Smith shows that she has the support of the MPD and the community as she gets these hard tasks completed. The Metropolitan Police Department is getting stronger with the strategies that she is bringing to DC. The arrest numbers are going up.

We really feel like police should be involved in the community in a way that the police know you and you know the police and Chief Smith has hit the ground running by developing a holistic approach with government, community, and faith-based leaders to combat the violence and provide a space for positive influences amongst the youth in community. The remedy of DC's crime issues requires consistent efforts and lots of community involvement.

We support Chief Smith because we believe that building bridges of communication, dignity and safety is paramount for all residents in the District of the Columbia regardless of the Ward.

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In our vision as a Community Partner we see the need of a sustainable partnership with MPD. We need quality interactions in all of the collaborative approaches with the community.

To build on the need for that consistent direct interaction with MPD, in situations other than an emergency response, we emphasized the need to connect through the community walks.

The 3D CAC piloted a monthly interagency community walk initiative with MPD. This community inclusive program has been consistent with block-by-block community engagement in the Third District. The community benefitted from this innovative process to reconnect the community as everyone was transitioning out of the pandemic.

Chief Smith came out to our community, and she listened, she reviewed, she participated, and she amplified this community walk as a weekly effort District wide.

This response is critically important to building trust and understanding among police and community members. We need to have productive interactions with MPD where the community's needs are seen and heard. We can attain the critical strides in public safety with this process.

Chief Smith is great at building relationships with local, federal, non-governmental, community, and faith-based partners resulting in the interest to support and stand beside her in leadership efforts. We applaud Chief Smith for building these relationships while also seeking the input of community not only during times of crisis. Chief Smith is

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well received and quite engaging she has attended parades, vigils, events, meetings and community celebrations and public safety walks.

In the District this support creates accessibility to the much-needed resources that the community needs to address crime and public safety concerns. Respect, Reliability and Trust plays a role in critical leadership in a diverse population.

Chief Pam Smith has an outstanding record of being an accomplished, focused and dedicated law enforcement executive she previously served as the Chief of Police for the US Park Police and served that agency for over two decades with outstanding leadership. She also served as the Metropolitan Police Department as the Chief Equity Officer as well as the Assistant Chief of Police for Homeland Security under former MPD Chief Robert Contee, III.

When the Community was asked for input and the competitive selection results came through and Chief Smith was appointed by our distinguished Mayor Muriel Bowser to lead the Metropolitan Police Department our 3D CAC membership was quite pleased.

We need a Police Chief that has the full support of the Mayor, MPD, DC City Council and the DC Residents.

One of Chief Smith's most significant accomplishments has been her emphasis on training, diversity, and inclusivity within the department. Her efforts to create a more diverse and culturally competent police force reflect a commitment to ensuring that all citizens are treated with fairness and respect, regardless of their background or circumstances.

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This approach not only enhances the effectiveness of the police force but also builds trust within the community.

Another one of Chief Smith's accomplishments is her support of MPD facilitating better options for childcare, mental health and career mentorship. We need a Police Chief who supports and understands that a good work environment leads to better officer morale and that helps with the better community engagement.

Furthermore, Chief Smith's dedication to modernizing law enforcement practices and embracing innovative technologies has helped improve the department's overall efficiency and effectiveness in crime prevention and public safety.

It is with this knowledge that the men and women of the Third District MPD Citizen's Advisory Council support Chief Pamela A. Smith as the next Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department for the District of Columbia, and respectfully request that the DC City Council confirm her nomination so that she may continue her pursuit of ensuring that the "Nation's Capital" is safe for citizens, businesses, and visitors.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Gaal

Chairwoman,

Third District MPD Citizen's Advisory Council

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**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 5D, SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT 5D06**



Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Public Roundtable on the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of

Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department

September 27, 2023

Testimony of Commissioner Kathy Henderson, 5D06, 5D Court Watch Coordinator

Good afternoon Committee Chairwoman Pinto, Councilmembers and gentlemen. I am Commissioner Kathy Henderson and I am serving my eleventh term as an effective, advisory neighborhood commissioner. I began the practice of community walks with the mayor, chief of police and agency representatives during my first term in office, to address violence and disorder in my new community. I created the Landlord Roundtable initiative to hold negligent property owners, including the D.C Housing Authority accountable for problem tenants. I created 5D Court Watch in 2008, in response to escalating crime, caused mostly by repeat offenders that drained police resources. These initiatives, underscoring working with District and Federal Government partners, including the U.S. Attorney and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton proved successful; the resulting 64% reduction in crime is what we are fighting to hold onto in my community as the city faces a violent reality with 209 homicides.

I come here today to urge you to prioritize getting our city, the nation's capital back on track by putting public safety first. Put our residents and visitors first and protect us. The first order of business is confirming Chief Pamela A. Smith as the next police chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). Chief Smith comes to MPD prepared, underscoring her 25 plus years of experience rising through police ranks to ultimately lead the U.S. Park Police as chief and serving as our interim police chief. Chief Smith has begun managing her human resources within the Department to better respond to rising crime while managing the reality of a shrinking police force. Chief Smith is educated, has professional experience, life experience, emotional intelligence and a firm spiritual foundation, which equip her with the necessary tools to lead MPD; she has the tools to lead us out of the mire of violence, fueled in part by disenfranchisement and self-hatred and she wants the job. Chief Smith stands in the face of a languishing but continuing "defund the police" campaign and steadfastly says she wants to be our police chief and she wants to improve our public safety for every D.C. resident and visitor.

I urge the Council to vote to confirm Chief Smith and to work to reverse the legislative barriers that are helping to embolden persons who are killing, robbing and creating havoc with seeming impunity. The Council and the Office of Attorney General need to reconsider supporting and funding unproven initiatives that have done nothing to improve public safety. These groups have been directed to communities that have some record of public safety challenges and they are recreating public safety problems in an effort to substantiate the work they are not doing. We deserve credible and accountable policing, which is proven to advance public safety. Let us support Pamela A. Smith as the District of Columbia's next Chief of Police and let us do the work to get back on track, including utilizing credible support, such as the National Guard, the 38 other law enforcement agencies in the District of Columbia and the Government-wide approach Chief Smith is activating.

Respectfully Submitted By,

KHenderson

Commissioner Kathy Henderson, 5D06

5D Court Watch Coordinator

In-Person Testimony of Kevin S. Wrege

Public Roundtable On the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Good morning, Councilmember Pinto, members and staff of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety.

I am Kevin Wrege. My growing family and I reside in the Palisades neighborhood in Ward 3. Both I and my wife Elizabeth have been District residents for nearly 25 years.

I am here today to testify in support of the nomination of Pamela Smith to the position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). Acting Chief Smith has more than 25 years of law enforcement experience, including serving as the Chief of Police for the United States Park Police. She began her career with the U.S. Park Police in 1998, rising through the ranks as sergeant, lieutenant, captain, major and deputy chief, until she was ultimately promoted to Chief of Police, becoming the agency's first African American female Chief in the agency's 230-year-old history. Smith joined the MPD in May 2022 as the Chief Equity Officer, where she has made a significant impact in a brief period, leading to her promotion in April 2023 to Assistant Chief of Police, Homeland Security Bureau.

I believe the Acting Chief is imminently qualified to serve as our next Chief of Police and I strongly recommend that she be confirmed to that position at the earliest practical juncture.

I should stipulate that I do not have a law enforcement or public safety background. I am testifying today in my individual capacity, not on behalf of any organization. My family and I love this city and as longtime residents, we are deeply committed to its future, which we believe is bright. But we worry of late about the increasingly challenging local and regional public safety environment, most especially the impact of crime on our the most vulnerable residents in neighborhoods that are contending with acute public safety challenges on a daily basis. All those who live and work here, perhaps most especially the women and men who proudly serve in the MPD, deserve the opportunity to be served by exceptional law enforcement leadership. I believe that Acting Chief Pamela A. Smith is ideally suited to now take on that crucial leadership role.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



September 14, 2023

Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chairwoman
Committee on Judiciary & Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building, Room 500
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Via portal

Reference: Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to Position of Chief of Police

Dear Councilmember Pinto,

I am providing this written testimony to inform the Committee that in a very short time, Pamela A. Smith has shown strong support and collaboration in my effort to educate campus stakeholders in the area of public safety. On August 25, 2023, Pamela personally took time out of her schedule to speak with our freshmen class and their families about Metropolitan Police Department's initiatives to keep them safe. She also provided worthwhile tips that should aid those members in better understanding how to navigate around the District of Columbia in a safer fashion. Additionally, Pamela has assured me that our collective efforts to maintain a safe campus community will be aided by the support of the Metropolitan Police Department.

Based on the aforementioned, I am in support of Pamela A. Smith being confirmed as Chief of Police.

Sincerely,

Kirk McLean
Associate Vice President,
Public Safety & Emergency Management

Kundan Karkhanis

My neighborhood feels dramatically more unsafe now than when I moved here in 2018. Armed carjackings and robberies seem to be a very frequent occurrence. Living here with a family feels very disconcerting. Based upon discussions with neighbors, including some long time residents of this area, here's what I would like the new police chief to prioritize:

1. increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
2. returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
3. encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
4. a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
5. an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime.

I wish her the best for our beloved city.

Laelia Gilborn

Ward 6 is being pummelled with multiple carjackings a week. I think twice about even driving to the grocery store in the evenings. I am not sure if my teen-aged kids are safer walking or driving home after practice, only to risk being carjacked. Carjackings were a rarity in the recent past, now it seems they have become a form of entertainment for teens and young adults.

Perhaps most tragic and concerning is that, based on MPD lookouts, the majority of carjackers are CHILDREN AND TEENS under the age of twenty. I can only conclude that their basic needs for education, employment, recreation, and other resources are not being met. Their needs need to be met in order to protect them from entering the justice system at a young age and to reduce crime in the long term.

I want the new police chief to prioritize:

- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime.
- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
- returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents

Thank you.



September 25, 2023

DC Council of the District of Columbia
Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chair
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Confirmation Hearing for Pamela Smith as Chief of Police

Dear Councilmember Pinto,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the confirmation of Metropolitan Police Department Chief of Police and Soror Pamela Smith. As a concerned citizen and a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, State of District of Columbia who is dedicated to serving this communities in the District, I believe Chief Smith is exceptionally qualified for this important position, and her dedication to public safety is evident in her track record and achievements.

Chief Pamela Smith has demonstrated exemplary leadership throughout her career in law enforcement. Her commitment to community policing principles and building strong relationships between the police force and the communities it serves is truly commendable. Under her leadership, the Metropolitan Police Department has seen notable improvements in transparency, accountability, and community engagement.

One of Chief Smith's most significant accomplishments has been her emphasis on training, diversity, and inclusivity within the department. Her efforts to create a more diverse and culturally competent police force reflect a commitment to ensuring that all citizens are treated with fairness and respect, regardless of their background or circumstances. This approach not only enhances the effectiveness of the police force but also builds trust within the community. Furthermore, Chief Smith's dedication to modernizing law enforcement practices and embracing innovative technologies has helped improve the department's overall efficiency and effectiveness in crime prevention and public safety.

Chief Smith took time to meet with the District of Columbia Sorors of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, and reassured us of her commitment to reduce the rise in crime we have been witnessing recently, and expressed her happiness and comfort that her Sorors would continue to provide support and programming that will hopefully aid in alleviating the needs for individuals to commit crimes.

I wholeheartedly urge the committee to confirm Chief Pamela Smith as the Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department. Her qualifications, dedication, and proven leadership make her an excellent choice for this crucial position, and I have every confidence that she will continue to serve our community with integrity and distinction. I am hopeful that you will make the decision to confirm Chief Pamela Smith, who is undoubtedly the right person to lead our city's police force into a safer and more secure future.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura N. Wilson

District of Columbia State Director
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated

P.O. Box 91934, Washington, D.C. 20090

Leroy A. Swain
4821 Queens Chapel Terrace, NE
Washington, DC 20017
taxi939@msn.com

District of Columbia City Council
Judicial and Public Safety Committee
1350 Pennsylvania, NW
Washington, DC 20004

September 25, 2023

To whom it may concern,

As a lifelong resident of Washington, DC and the Brother in Law of the late Chief of Police, Maurice Turner, I am extremely proud to come before you today in support of the confirmation of Pamela A. Smith to become the next Chief of Police.

Today, Washington, DC is facing unprecedented challenges concerning public safety. A serious increase in crime, carjacking and street violence, has forced a serious self-examination by all residents to answer the question of what can be done to save our city? My response to that question is to immediately confirm Pamela A. Smith as Chief of Police.

Since her appointment in July, Acting Chief Smith has treated her responsibilities more than just another job in the police department. I have observed Chief Smith's personal characteristics of integrity, fairness, honesty and the ability to be stern when necessary. Furthermore, as the liaison to the public for the police department, Chief Smith has been accessible and open-minded. She has been on hand at public meetings throughout every quadrant of the city and has made citizens feel comfortable approaching the police chief with any issues or concerns.

Over the last four months that Acting Chief Smith has been on the job, she has emphasized the importance of promoting diversity in the workplace to include cultural diversity and diversity in thought processes which has allowed for creativity and

innovation in policing. Additionally, Acting Chief Smith has embraced social justice and policing reforms. At a meet and greet that I held this summer, all sixty of my neighbors who heard her speak on these issues stood up and praised her.

In closing, I am totally convinced that Acting Chief Pamela A Smith, possesses the ability to establish trust and confidence, create and sustain an ethical police culture, enforce the laws fairly and impartially, apply critical thinking to problem solving, exercise good judgment in decision making and will strategically develop effective community relationships that will enable all of our citizens to feel safe again. I am asking the members of the District of Columbia City Council to confirm Pamela A. Smith's appointment as Chief of Police.

Linda Green - Fort Davis Civic Association, Inc.

Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Time: 11:00am

Good Morning: DC City Council Members, and Chairman Phil Mendelson, Council of the District of Columbia.

Judiciary and Public Safety Committee Hearings.

Council Confirmation Hearings: Regarding

Confirmation Hearings for Acting Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith, to be Confirmed as Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department.

I, Linda S. Green, The President, and the

Executive Officers, and Members, and the Residents of the Fort Davis Civic Association,

and the Residents of the Fort Davis Community, proudly Support the Nomination of The Honorable Mayor Muriel Bowser, to Confirm the Acting Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith, to be Confirmed as our Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department, District of Columbia.

I, and the Executive Officers of the Fort Davis Civic Association, Inc. and the Residents of the Fort Davis Community, by Support of our Written Testimony, Do hereby Support the Nomination of Mayor Bowser, to Support the Nomination of Acting Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith, to be Confirmed and Received Endorsement to Support 100% percent Endorsement.

Her Experience comes with Specialized Experience and she has demonstrated her abilities, to Lead, and managed the Police Department with Responsibility and Accountability.

Acting. Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith, have, Excellent Skills, in Human Resources, Employee Training, Excellent Communication Skills and Management, with Excellent Listening Skills.

She has a Wealth of Specialized Experience in Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion.

This Written Testimony, Concludes our Support for Acting Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith to be Named and Confirmed as our Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department, District of Columbia.

Submitted on Tuesday, September, 26, 2023

Time: Submitted: 11:50am

Thanking Everyone...

Linda S. Green, President

And Executive Officers, and Members

And Residents of the Fort Davis COMMUNITY.

PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY."

CONTACT NUMBER: 202-581-5507

Michael Skinner

I'm concerned about the increase in crimes like armed robberies and carjackings in my neighborhood. I want the new police chief to prioritize:

- increasing visible patrols in neighborhoods
- returning to a policy of officers walking the beat
- encouraging officers that patrol a neighborhood to actively get to know us, our neighbors, and our community groups
- a collaboration between MPD, DDOT, and other agencies to improve lighting, clean up vacant properties, and make our streets safer for residents
- an increase in policies and programs that help prevent our children from becoming involved in violence and crime.

Written Testimony
of
The Hon. Kathy Patterson
D.C. Auditor

Prepared for the

Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Public Roundtable on
the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith
to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

September 27, 2023

The John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

The Office of the D.C. Auditor (ODCA) provides this written testimony to assist the Council of the District of Columbia and the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety in considering the nomination of Pamela A. Smith to serve as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). I ask that this statement be included in the record for this public roundtable and the record of the nomination resolution when it is forwarded to the Council.

In my nearly nine years at ODCA we have covered a great deal of ground related to law enforcement including major studies on Metropolitan Police Department use of force investigations, regular reviews of oversight of First Amendment activities, and a report last year on members of MPD who were terminated and reinstated. At the direction of the Council, we have recently created the position of Deputy Auditor for Public Safety and hired Christopher Magnus, a veteran chief of police in three U.S. cities, to fill that position. We have assembled a team of six staff members to date, and their work will initially include overseeing a police staffing study and assessing whether there are white nationalism influences within the MPD as required by Council legislation.

On September 14, 2023, we released the second of two comprehensive reports on the implementation of the Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results (NEAR) Act, the 2016 omnibus bill designed to bring a public health approach to violence prevention in the District of Columbia. The second report, [NEAR Act Police Reforms Advance Procedural Justice But Data Initiatives Stall](#), covered a wide range of policing reforms mandated by the legislation and several of these will be the focus of this testimony. While there are a great many issues with which the next permanent police chief will grapple, my assumption is that this roundtable will focus most heavily on the current state of crime and fear of crime in the District of Columbia reflected in news reports, Council testimony, and social media.

As a public official I share with legislators the responsibility to use the powers of my office to promote effective and successful government policies—essentially to do all that I can do. Our recent NEAR Act report made clear that the Bowser Administration has not taken all the steps that it could take and that the 2016 law, in fact, mandated to prevent crime. A case in point: the law required the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPS&J) to produce annual reports on felony crime data. They have not been published timely nor have they been used when published. The most recent report is from 2019. And as far back as 2018 the reports found that a high percentage of felony arrests did not result in prosecution—a fact much-discussed today but something that should have been debated by law enforcement partners starting then.

Specific issues from the NEAR Act report that we recommend asking Acting Chief Smith about:

Staffing issues at the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Crime Scene Sciences Division (CSSD).

What steps will Chief Smith take with her chain of command—Deputy Mayor, City Administrator, and Mayor—and her peers at DFS to address the serious staffing problems in the CSSD?

Our report noted that the CSSD has been plagued by a high vacancy rate and has been sustained by 13 retired MPD officers who are likely to retire permanently in the next few years. The officers are generally around 60 years of age and have already put in roughly 30 years each. The administration's original plan was for DFS to assume full control of crime scene response with non-police forensic scientists *by FY 2018*. That goal still hasn't been reached, and when our audit began there were still 24 *active-duty* MPD officers assigned to crime scene response. At the end of our audit period that number had dropped to seven but that is still a pressure on MPD resources.

The staff shortage can have a real impact on crime-solving. Because of shortages DFS can't respond quickly to a crime scene. Evidence can be lost or contaminated. Second, the crime scene reports that detectives need to investigate and prosecute cases may be delayed. Third, MPD officers often must "hold the scene" until DFS arrives which means those responding officers can't go back on patrol.

We recommended that DFS develop and submit a plan to the Mayor and Council with timetables for achieving full, long-term staffing of the CSSD and bringing personnel practices there into compliance with D.C. law and regulations. One aspect of the leadership role of a chief of police is to lead within the Executive Branch, working closely with peers and those in her own chain of command. ***What role does Chief Smith anticipate taking—or what steps has she already taken—to see that this staffing crisis is addressed, given the heavy impact on MPD personnel, on crime scene management, and on crime solving?***

Use of data to inform policies and practices on preventing and mitigating crime

There is broad concern about the systemwide performance of our criminal justice system from incident to arrest to prosecution to conviction and sentencing. Our report noted the NEAR Act required the DMPS&J to produce annual reports on felony crime data, as noted above. One of the 2018 findings—that a high percentage of felony arrests do not result in prosecution—has been widely debated in recent months. But what else do the data show? Because the reports for 2020 and 2021 have not yet been produced we have recommended that the responsibility be transferred to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. But the broader point is this: In the middle of a public safety crisis in the District, why are we not evaluating and using the crime data we collect?

What steps does Chief Smith plan to take to ensure that policy and practice are based on what the data tell us? Will she demand that the felony crime data reports be brought up to date for maximum use by her and her team? Will she ensure that the data are mined for everything we can learn about prevention and mitigation?

Further, what will she do to ensure that the on-again/off-again independent analysis of police stop data moves forward? Four years ago MPD pledged to pursue “both public and private options to support this sort of rigorous and independent research” on police stop data. In their written response to our recent NEAR Act report MPD said they were finalizing an MOU with two universities to do this work. ***What is the status of the MOU with the universities?***

The above questions represent the issues in our recent report most closely associated with efforts to reduce and prevent crime in D.C. There is a long list of other issues that we hope the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety will pursue in its oversight before and after the consideration of Chief Smith as MPD chief. Attached to this statement is a list of ODCA recommendations from recent reports directed to MPD related to law enforcement and crime prevention to serve as a resource to Councilmembers and staff in conducting the roundtable and considering the confirmation. The reports drawn from, in addition to the recent report mentioned above, are [The Metropolitan Police Department and the Use of Deadly Force: Four Case Studies 2018-2019](#), [36 Fired MPD Officers Reinstated; Receive \\$14 Million in Back Pay](#) and [NEAR Act Violence Prevention and Interruption Efforts: Opportunities to Strengthen New Program Models](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to share this statement and please let us know if you have any questions.

ODCA Report Recommendations to the Metropolitan Police Department

Note: Recommendations from The Metropolitan Police Department and the Use of Deadly Force: Four Case Studies 2018-2019 were reported as "In progress" in ODCA's 2023 recommendation compliance report.

Date	Report	Recommendation
3/23/2021	The Metropolitan Police Department and the Use of Deadly Force: Four Case Studies 2018-2019	7. MPD Should Release IAD's Final Investigative Report and the UFRB's Conclusions to the Public.
		26. MPD should ensure that all officers are adequately trained on how to use the ballistic shield, including how the deploying officer is to handle his pistol while holding the shield and the tactical formations to be employed when a shield is being used.
		27. MPD should review training on how to breach a door, including training on when and how to do so, and the proper equipment to use. Training should be provided on each relevant breaching device available to the officer before the officer is authorized to use it.
		28. MPD should provide and reinforce tactical training at regular intervals to relevant MPD personnel on how to approach a location where entry is contemplated and there is indication that an armed subject is within the premises to be entered. The training should address being in the line of fire, stacking, the "fatal funnel," and seeking cover.
10/6/2022	36 Fired MPD Officers Reinstated; Receive \$14 Million in Back Pay	4. MPD should comply with statutory requirements on timely action in discipline matters, provide evidence sufficient to support any MPD appeals, and recommend clarification to the requirements to the extent needed.
		6. To reduce the cost to the D.C. government of lengthy appeals, MPD should work with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to develop written criteria for whether to appeal termination cases including a financial risk assessment.

Date	Report	Recommendation
		7. MPD should stop ignoring court orders and reinstate terminated employees in a timely fashion when so ordered.
		8. As part of the required annual report on misconduct and grievances, MPD should analyze the disciplinary data from the prior year to assess trends in misconduct and guide initiatives that reduce misconduct.
		12. The Metropolitan Police Department should comply with the law by establishing the Community Crime Prevention Teen program, in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and the Department of Human Services.
9/14/2023	NEAR Act Police Reforms Advance Procedural Justice but Data Initiatives Stall	1. The Metropolitan Police Department should convene a Community Policing Working Group of 10 to 15 members to operate on a continuous basis and examine national best practices in community policing.
		7. The Chief of Police should cease allowing an officer to undergo education-based development as the sole response to a finding of misconduct by an Office of Police Complaints hearing examiner.
		9. The Metropolitan Police Department and the Police Complaints Board should collect and report data on the number of subjects involved in use of force incidents, and the crime charged if an arrest was made in a use of force incident.
		11. The Metropolitan Police Department should publish the stop data required by the NEAR Act at regular six-month intervals.
		12. The Metropolitan Police Department should commission independent analysis of the outcomes of police stops and whether there is racial or ethnic bias in stops using the preferred research methods identified by The Lab @ DC.

Mr. Paul B. Thorpe
610 Emmanuel Court, NW, #303
Washington, DC 20001

September 22, 2023

DC Council of the District of Columbia
Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chair
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Good Afternoon Councilmember Brooke Pinto and the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Paul B. Thorpe. I am a resident of the District of Columbia, resident of Shaw and a longtime activist for Shaw. Councilmember Pinto you are very aware of my current involvement in the Shaw community as an active participant and community activist. In prior years I was also very heavily involved with the new Washington Convention Center and many issues involving the construction as it affected the community, in addition to serving on committees and working in conjunction with a DC Council office.

Today, I would like to submit my written testimony in support of the nomination for Ms. Pamela as the new Police Chief for the District of Columbia. Since first meeting Interim Ms. Pamela Smith at your Public Safety Forum in Chinatown, I gathered a sense of someone who is very engaged, receptive and understands the issues of law enforcement as it affects the District of Columbia. Ms. Pamela Smith has been completely focused and visible with regards to the numerous crime sprees and shooting that have been plaguing the city.

Further, Ms. Pamela Smith appears to highly intelligent, well-grounded and having served through the ranks, shares an excellent understanding of what it takes to command such an incredible city such as the District of Columbia. I like her approach to resolving the many issues, particularly the array of shootings that have plagued the city.

It is my opinion that that Ms. Pamela Smith would be an excellent Police Chief for the District of Columbia and I thoroughly support and encourage her nomination.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Paul B. Thorpe

Rebecca Winthrop

Dear Sir/Madam: I am very concerned about the massive uptick in crime in the city. I live in Council Member Charles Allen's district. Three weeks ago at 6pm on a busy East Capitol Street corner, a group of three kids, and I mean, kids (ages 7, 10, 12 by the looks of them) stole my phone as I was walking down the street. We called the police but of course did not want to file a report because these are small children. They need help. Clearly they are being put up to it. When we told the officers (after calling non emergency 911) they said that unless we wanted to press charges, there was nothing really they could do. We suggested that surely there was someone they (or we) should contact to get these children help (we had pictures of the children that a neighbor walking down the street who witnessed the incident had taken). But when pressed it was clear that the officers didn't really have training nor tools nor people to call to help the kids (we had 5 officers respond within 2 minutes of the call, all rushing over in their cars, even though we said it was not an emergency when we called 911).

These seems ridiculous in a city that clearly has resources but seems unable to be able to have different expertise (police, social workers, youth outreach, neighborhood groups, etc.) work together. It also is a sign of what many of our neighbors who have lived in the area for decades say has changed: nobody knows our beat cops, police are not walking on the streets, they don't know the community, they don't have their finger on the pulse, they don't know the kids. If you don't want policy walking around then have youth outreach workers or social workers out and about working coordinating with policy when needed. But this isn't happening either.

Our phone snatch incident is minor compared to the gun violence in other areas of the city. It is also minor compared to what our neighbors have experienced in just the last three months: car jacking at gunpoint (too many for me to count), beaten up and purse stolen at gunpoint, purse snatching, and last week a woman was tragically shot in front of a neighbors house. The constant drug dealing in the neighborhood pocket parks where our kids play and the thefts of bikes and packages that we have experienced for years seems quaint compared to what is going on now.

My family and I urge you to choose a policy chief that has a strong track record of turning around a policy department in a large, high crime city so that there is seamless coordination of the supports needed to (justly) keep all our neighbors safe. My concern is that the current nominee has no such track record.

Best,

Rebecca Winthrop

REMARKS OF LISA S. LEVAL

Before the Council of the District of Columbia

September 27, 2023

My name is Lisa Leval. I am an over forty-five-year resident of DC Ward 2 and I have the honor of serving as a member of the Metropolitan Police Department's Chief of Police Citizens Advisory Council and as the Vice Chair of the Second District Citizens Advisory Council.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my support for the confirmation of Pamela Smith as the next Chief of Police of the District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police Department.

Ms. Smith comes to her position with a somewhat unusual background. She makes no secret of the difficulties she encountered in her childhood, having experienced violence as a young person. As such, her professional success is a testimonial that it is possible to overcome such terrible disadvantages and still achieve great things and, importantly, her life story can serve as an inspiration to many.

Pamela Smith is, also, an ordained minister. In my view, this is a particularly important qualification.

We live in a time when our traditional values are under siege, values which have underpinned our Western civilization for centuries. We live in a time when families are either non-existent or in deep distress. Who better to understand the importance of promoting solid families, as an antidote to crime, than someone who preaches religious principles? Who can better seek to restore peace to our community than a person of deep religious faith who is prepared to put her faith to work for the community? Pamela Smith assuredly understands human behavior and is in a position to fully appreciate the current crime crisis which our community is experiencing.

It is also true that Ms. Smith has served as chief DEI officer of the Metropolitan Police Department. As a consequence, she should be aware, far more than most people, of the negative effects of seeking to impose quotas, of any sort, on a police force; of the detrimental effect of hiring solely on the basis of race, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity or ideology.

We are at a time when the strengthening confidence in the MPD should be a key goal of the new chief of police. Police officers can only engender communal confidence and trust if they show themselves to be competent in

the performance of their tasks. Competent police officers are hired based on their ability to perform and on their temperament, not on the color of their skin or their gender.

We must not try to correct the racist mistakes of our past with an overcorrection in our behavior that only serves to discriminate in the opposite direction.

Ms. Smith's experience as Chief DEI officer, therefore, should lead Ms. Smith to reject any attempt to base the hiring and promotion of police officers on any criteria other than the highest levels of competence, professionalism, appropriate temperament, intelligence, discernment and, above all, good judgment. To paraphrase the eloquent remarks of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., the MPD and, indeed, every component of government, needs to hire and promote people strictly on the basis of the content of the character of each individual and not on external, immutable and irrelevant factors.

For these reasons, I am pleased to endorse Ms. Smith's candidature for Chief of Police. However, I must emphasize that my endorsement is subject to certain conditions, which I hope that Ms. Smith and the DC Council will consider with care.

First, Ms. Smith needs to commit that she will lead the MPD, not as a social engineering organization, but strictly as a law enforcement agency – devoted to protecting the safety and security of all our citizens in all areas of the District and to applying our laws fairly, but strictly.

We need fewer "violence interrupters," and more law enforcement agents on the streets. We need to stop encouraging police officers to deliver footballs to juveniles as a means of endeavoring to coopt them as friends. The youth of the District are not our friends, they are our responsibility. We must guide and mentor them by clearly and fairly enforcing laws regardless of the age of violators because our society cannot tolerate violent behavior by anyone.

Police officers are not, and should not be, social workers. Police officers are not, and should not be, mental health professionals. While officers need to understand the difference between psychotic and criminal behavior, they are in no position to treat mental illness.

Ms. Smith must commit to seek to increase the number of officers to not fewer than pre-COVID levels. She must agree to eliminate DEI considerations in creating a more professional police force. While making certain

that all qualified applicants have an equal opportunity to serve, she must agree that only professional qualifications for service as a police officer will be taken into account in hiring for, and in promotions within, the Police Department. All other criteria must be cast aside.

Then, she must commit to having her officers vigorously, even relentlessly, enforce applicable laws. This means having the MPD apply our laws fairly and equally, regardless of who the offender may be, including juvenile offenders, and she must commit to work with all of our local prosecutors to make certain that offenders, once arrested, are not immediately returned to the streets, but are properly processed in accordance with the due process requirements of our Constitution.

In the pursuit of the role of the family in our jurisdiction, she must commit to work with the DC Council to hold parents responsible for the behavior of their children when that behavior transgresses the laws of the District. It is self-evident that much of our current juvenile crime problem is the result of an absence of parental supervision – a situation that we must all work to rectify and which can only be corrected by a cooperative effort between you, as legislators, and our police force, as enforcers of our laws.

In sum, I am certain that Ms. Smith will make an outstanding Chief of Police, if she will agree to the implementation of these several conditions, which, I believe, can help to reduce our current crime crisis.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for Pamela Smith and to articulate the conditions that I believe can make Ms. Smith the most consequential Chief of the Metropolitan Police in a generation.

* * * * *

**RETIRES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY
WASHINGTON, DC 20020**

Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
**Roundtable On the Matter of the Nomination of
Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan**
Room 500 of the John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW,
Washington, DC 20004

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

**TESTIMONY
OF
CAPTAIN (RET) DEREK DAVIS
ON BEHALF OF THE
RETIRES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY
OF
WASHINGTON, DC**

Dear Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chair, Judiciary and Public Safety
Committee, and members of the Committee. My name is Derek Davis, Army
Captain (Ret), a Combat Veteran, and a graduate of Anacostia Senior High School.
I have also served as Chair of my PSA, I'm an educator and entrepreneur, and I

RETIREES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY
WASHINGTON, DC 20020

personally, presently serve as the Spokesperson for the Retirees for Accountability, a non-partisan group of retirees comprised of former members of MPD, Military, Disabled Veterans, Clergy, Community Activists, both Federal and Local government retirees.

In 2018 the Retirees for Accountability, convened at the IHOP on Alabama Avenue SE to discuss matters of concern about Public Safety and Policing. During that meeting, which included the then Chief and two Assistant Chiefs, it was decided that we would continue to provide our observations and critiques regarding public safety and policing in the District of Columbia.

Recently, members of our group met with Acting Chief Pamela A. Smith. We had a very productive conversation with her and look forward to continuing our relationship with her. Afterward it was the consensus of our members that we would support the confirmation of Acting Chief Pamela A. Smith to become the next Washington, DC, Chief of the Metropolitan Police.

In closing, we would like to challenge the Council, and the mayor, to provide our next Chief with their full supportive efforts in policing and community engagement. Furthermore, we suggest that once Confirmed that Chief Smith do the following:

RETIRES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY
WASHINGTON, DC 20020

- 1). Engage more with the Blue Shirts in the Police Department.
- 2). Complete the reviews of all inquiries and investigations regarding harassment and retaliation.
- 3). Ensure all the CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCILS/POLICE SERVICE AREAS are fully functional and meeting on a regular basis.
- 4). Meet regularly with the Retirees for Accountability and the Faith Community.
- 5). Meet with the Nonprofits and Business Owners on a regular basis.
- 6). Include youth leaders in regular dialogue and strategy sessions; and
- 7). develop a comprehensive strategy to help with recruitment and retention of officers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony, on behalf of selecting the next Chief of our Great City and I will remain for any questions.

###

**Testimony of the Ward 7 Faith Leaders
in Support of the Confirmation of
Pamela A. Smith as
Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department
of the District of Columbia**

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry, Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church (Ward 7)

To Council Chair Mendelson, to the Committee Chair Councilmember Brooke Pinto, and to all the distinguished members of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee, Good Afternoon. I am Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry—a nearly 20-year resident and pastor of the Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Ward 7.

It is honor and privilege to testify in support of the confirmation of Pamela A. Smith as our next Chief of Police because DC is in a state of emergency as it surpasses 200 homicides in 2023. The inability to resolve disputes civilly, the sale of illicit drugs, the proliferation of substance abuse, and the myriad of complex social determinants of health resulting in senseless murders, serial carjackings, and other violence must stop! We need a leader who will help the traumatized families who live in fear and suffer from violence fatigue, to “feel safe.” Acting Chief Smith has a plan to make DC safe “while we are sleeping.”

To achieve her goal, first, Acting Chief Smith has formed solid community partnerships. Within the first couple of weeks on the job, she showed herself friendly by “showing up”, listening to, and engaging communities East of the River with her officers by her side. She has taken time to understand District residents, and continually seeks to win their trust by being responsive to concerns, by being present at crime scenes with her “top brass”, and by creating a tough-on-crime culture. She is honest and transparent, openly telling it like it is. She has heard the cries of residents, seen our afflictions, and she is showing up where the brokenness is because she cares for people and their quality of life.

To beat back crime, Acting Chief Smith is poised to relentlessly disrupt criminal behavior. She has suggested that she will not just use the traditional playbook on crime. Rather, she will be intentional in getting guns and the people who use them off the street. She will use all the tools at her disposal to problem-solve around how to clean up neighborhoods so that residents “feel safe” and are less traumatized day by day. This will take time, and there may be some upticks in violence, but I believe over the long run, Acting Chief Smith will methodically continue to clear street corners and open-air drug markets, and appropriately lockup offenders—including juveniles—while yet advocating for support to address the social determinants that lead to juvenile and adult engagement in crime.

**Testimony of the Ward 7 Faith Leaders
in Support of the Confirmation of
Pamela A. Smith as
Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department
of the District of Columbia**

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry, Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church (Ward 7)

Acting Chief Smith has come to DC for such a time as this! As a pastor whose ministry is continually on the front lines of closing disparity gaps and eliminating violence in our community, I prayerfully and wholeheartedly urge you to confirm Pamela A. Smith as Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department. I ask that the Mayor and DC Council give her the budget required to eradicate gun violence in the District of Columbia and to keep residents safe! Loose her and watch the shift in crime in DC communities happen.

###

Rev. Wanda Thompson

Good Morning Councilmembers,

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the hiring of Interim Police Chief Pamela A. Smith as our next Chief of Police. She has proven herself to be a committed, compassionate partner to our community and one who is invested in ending the violence in our city. I hope that you will vote to have her assume this role so that she can continue her efforts to enhance and ensure the public's safety and trust in our police. As we hold her accountable, she will also hold us accountable. Thank you so much for your attention.

Robert Stanton

Dear Madam/ Sir ,

As one who has worked closely with the Metropolitan Police Department for the District of Columbia over the course of my 35-year career with the National Park Service, I am pleased to write to endorse the nomination of Ms. Pamela A. Smith as the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. Ms. Smith has worked in progressively responsible positions with the United States Park Police in New York City and Washington. D.C . She acquitted herself extremely well in those assignments.

I know Ms. Smith will be a credit to the citizens and the government of the District of Columbia.

Thank you.

Respectfully Yours,

Robert G. Stanton

Former Director

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

703-656-6847

Testimony on the Matter of the Nomination of Pamela A. Smith to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

Members of the City Council:

Good evening. I'm writing to you on Saturday, September 2nd. There was a carjacking two blocks from my house about 9:30 this evening, and another five blocks away an hour later. Far worse, eleven people were shot in Washington DC over the past 24 hours, five fatally. Several of the dead were teens.

This disaster has many causes. Some of the responsibility likely rests with DC's government; much does not. I'm writing to you about one upcoming decision that *will* make a difference: the choice of a highly qualified police chief. I am not convinced that acting chief Pamela Smith is the right candidate.

I base that comment simply on the acting chief's professional experience: she has had no operational responsibility in a city police department – period. Over the past year Pamela Smith served as MPD's Chief Equity Officer. Other than that, her career has been entirely within the National Park Service Police, culminating in one year as the Park Police Chief in 2021-2022. That police force is very skilled in getting hikers off of dangerous ledges and performing similar outdoor rescue and enforcement duties. The Park Police's responsibility for urban policing is close to nil. Locally, the Park Police is best known for killing an unarmed motorist in Virginia in 2017, Bijan Ghaisar, and then refusing to provide any explanation. Some of that stonewalling occurred on Pamela Smith's watch as Park Police chief. Last April the federal government paid the Ghaisar family \$5 million in compensation.

You and the other council members will have to judge whether Pamela Smith is the best candidate we can hire for DC's police chief. You presumably will be drawing on more information than I have available, and you may decide on that basis that she should be confirmed. But I ask that you consider this appointment on its merits, not as a matter of political optics and expediency. Public safety in DC is deteriorating fast. You owe it to the citizens of DC to find a candidate for chief who has both the operational experience and the leadership skills to lead a diminished and demoralized police force in a very difficult time.

Sincerely,

Robert Winthrop

130 10th Street NE

Colony of Washington, DC 20002

202-744-2701 (cell) • rob.winthrop1@gmail.com

Sandra "SS" Seegars
1107 Savannah St SE,
Washington, DC 20032
Ward 8

Nomination of Pamela A. Smith
to the Position of Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department

I am Sandra "SS" Seegars, Ward 8 resident, and Co-founder and Convener of CRÄV (Concerned Residents Against Violence). CRÄV consists of 7 members who are well-established in the community, Darrell Gaston, Rev. Anthony Motley, Anthony Muhammad, SV Willaims, Pastor David Venable, and Lenwood Johnson. CRÄV is in support of the nomination of Pamela Smith for the next police chief of MPD.

The Council's Committee on Public Safety and Justice is to ensure safety for all citizens within the boundary of the District of Columbia. In an effort to make it safe, this committee must enact laws to do so. The first line of making it safe is the police department. For the police department to be effective, it needs a capable leader, hence, we believe the nomination of Pamela Smith is recognized to be that.

CRÄV believes the police department's goal is to protect citizens from criminal activities. In this role of protection, it is supposed to remove anyone in violation of this premise. The police are not supposed to be babysitters of criminals nor coddling them. Their role is to arrest criminals. Somewhere along the way in DC, we have gotten away from that and are putting duties on the police that should be executed by other agencies who focus on the following: education, behavior health, family issues, lack of proper food, housing, etc.

In supporting Pamela Smith, my advice to her is to arrest criminals and let the other agencies deal with issues that are not actually under the MPD's purview. The chief of any police department should never say "we cannot arrest our way out of crime" when the main duty of the police is to arrest. When others say we cannot arrest our way out of crime, it is just a play on words to discourage the police from doing their job. At any time, a police officer says that they do not need to be an officer because the police are hired to arrest criminals.

To the Councilmembers, until you stop hamstringing the police department it is going to be a problem getting new officers, and Chief Smith should not be blamed for that because it is something she has inherited. For the Mayor to choose Pamela Smith, formerly with the United States Park Police (USPP) for 24 years, is a sign that her tenure there has given her some qualifications that would be in line with what MPD needs.

END

Amended testimony.

Listening to some of the Council members, I do not believe my ears. The very same ones who are crying about the condition we are in now and that we need more police coverage are the exact same ones who brought us to where we are now, led by Councilmember Charles Allen with knee-jerk reactions after George Floyd's murder, and a few yelling citizens posing as Black Lives Matter. I find myself repeating this catchphrase, the chickens have come home to roost. This Council, when led by Allen, acted as if every police officer in DC murdered George Floyd which was extremely wrong. Now we are attempting to re-circle the wagons which is not going to happen overnight.

The question was asked, what does success look like? Success looks like a Council that supports the police department by writing laws that are enforceable, stopping the decriminalization of crimes, holding MPD officers liable for what they actually did wrong, and not putting the burden on them because of what officers in other jurisdictions committed.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Parks and Recreation

Office of the Director

October 11, 2023

The Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Brooke Pinto, Chairperson
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C., 20004

RE: Hearing record for PR25-0384 - Chief of Metropolitan Police Department Pamela A. Smith
Confirmation Resolution for 2023

Chairperson Pinto and Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in support of Pamela A. Smith's pending confirmation to serve as Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). As Acting Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), I lead an agency whose employees work every day across all eight wards to provide District residents with high-quality recreational programs, services, and facilities. That includes engaging our young people in healthy, productive activities and simply providing a safe place outside of school and home where young people can do a myriad of things, such as sports, cultural arts, swimming, or simply just to have fun with their friends. Our centers are in fact, a home away from home for many of our youth. A partnership with our police department is necessary. An effective, engaged police force is critical to this work by ensuring a safe environment for our residents to enjoy all of DPR's many offerings.

One must only look at Acting Chief Smith's own biography to see how healthy activities can help young people meet their potential. Acting Chief Smith credits her high school track and field coach, Andrew Butler, as helping her develop the strategic skills and techniques that she has used throughout her distinguished career, not to mention helping her become a 3-time All-American in Track and Field while studying at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Acting Chief Smith knows how focusing a young person on a positive activity can help them overcome obstacles and change the trajectory of a young person's life.

Since meeting her, I have found Acting Chief Smith an engaged, innovative, and proactive partner in our common goal of serving District residents and keeping them safe. This summer, DPR engaged over 34,000 residents at 197 events across all eight wards, and the work cannot be done alone. Acting Chief Smith has ensured MPD was a valuable partner throughout the summer, whether that means offering technical assistance to complete Special Event Emergency Plans or providing comprehensive support on an event like Chuck Brown Day.

When I called Acting Chief Smith to ask her to meet with DPR's Youth Advisory Council, she was excited to sit down with them and engage directly. DPR worked with MPD and Washington

Commanders quarterback Jacoby Brissett to host a community bike ride to support better police-community relations. That event included providing over 50 bicycles for local young people and engaging hundreds more at surrounding community day. When I have had the opportunity to call on Acting Chief Smith, she has always answered the call.

Beyond lending support to specific events, my conversations with Acting Chief Smith indicate that she has a deep understanding of how to manage a department and the bold vision to lead MPD at this critical time. We have discussed how DPR can fill gaps in programming by meeting young people where they are to keep them out of trouble. We have recognized and discussed strengthening the unique relationship our agencies have among the officers who patrol neighborhoods and the DPR recreation centers that are often in the hub of those communities. I hope to be able to continue to work with Acting Chief Smith to deepen the relationship between our agencies in service of a healthier, safer District for everyone.

I am tremendously proud that DC has been named the #1 park system in the United States for the past three years by the Trust for Public Land. While DPR is the driving force and heartbeat of recreation in the District, I must also acknowledge that our ranking benefits from a robust network of parkland and open space managed by the National Park Service and kept safe by the United States Park Police (USPP), the very police force that Acting Chief Smith once led. I have no doubt that her experience at the USPP will be a benefit to DPR and the entire District government.

While Acting Chief Smith's resume duly notes all of her tangible accomplishments, there are accomplishments that cannot be captured on paper. She has a special ability to connect with people from varying backgrounds. I have witnessed her special ability to easily develop an authentic rapport with everyone, from constituents, advocates, and colleagues to those who may be viewed as adversarial. She respects individual perspectives and stands with grace in every conversation. She possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence that allows her to discern the best approach to providing resolutions. Again, this is not something that one's resume would speak to, but it is a necessary skill for this position at this time!

Finally, I must acknowledge the historical significance of Acting Chief Smith's nomination. Just as she was the first Black woman to serve as Chief of Police in the 230-year history of the USPP, Acting Chief Smith would be the first Black woman to lead MPD. While I look forward to a time when we no longer require trailblazers like Acting Chief Smith, she is uniquely positioned to meet the moment and serve with distinction.

With her exemplary leadership, distinguished public service, and relatable lived experience, I genuinely believe Acting Chief Smith is the right person to lead the police department in the city I love. I urge all members of the Council Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety and every member of the Council to confirm Acting Chief Smith as MPD's next Chief of Police.

Sincerely,

Thennie M. Freeman

**Testimony of the Ward 7 Faith Leaders
in Support of the Confirmation of
Pamela A. Smith as
Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department
of the District of Columbia**

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

To Council Chair Mendelson, to the Chair of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, Councilmember Brooke Pinto, and to all the distinguished members of your Committee, Good Afternoon. I am Irwin Royster, representing the Ward 7 Faith Leaders, which I co-convene with Rev. Karen Curry. Rev. Curry could not be here today and sends her highest regards. We both want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

You may be more familiar with me in one of my other capacities, as Director of Community Engagement and Partnerships for the East River Family Strengthening Collaborative. ERFSC, along with the Anacostia Coordinating Council and the East of the River Clergy Police Community Partnership, helped to establish the Ward 7 Faith Leaders in 2019 to address the increase in violent crime in our Ward.

I am honored to testify before you today in support of the confirmation of Pamela A. Smith as our next Chief of Police.

Acting Chief Smith has brought an energy to our city that is critically needed at this time. She hit the ground running, making herself accessible and accountable to members of the community at every level. After only being on the job barely two weeks, she was already showing up at community meetings, such as the Wards 7&8 Clergy and Faith Leaders meeting, showing up on foot in places where people told her the needs were, and showing her compassion and commitment to an engaged approach to policing, fitting right in with the many MPD officers already dedicated to community engagement and community policing, and challenging those who were not.

She has continued to show up and follow up, listening to the concerns of the community and taking prompt action. Acting Chief Smith promised and has already delivered on having MPD increase the speed and efficiency in which perpetrators are arrested, refusing to accept a "we'll look into it next week" mentality, and maintaining the sense of urgency befitting the crisis state we're in. She is not afraid to take hard measures, such as temporarily closing down establishments in her quest to face head-on anything that intentionally or even unwittingly feeds the atmosphere or sets up opportunities for violence to occur.

Her professionalism, her energy, her strong yet compassionate leadership style, and her willingness to keep showing up are taking our confidence in MPD to another level, which is critical in light of the fact that violence throughout our city has been occurring at another level.

**Testimony of the Ward 7 Faith Leaders
in Support of the Confirmation of
Pamela A. Smith as
Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department
of the District of Columbia**

**Wednesday, September 27, 2023
Cont'd**

Acting Chief Smith is right on time and well-suited to spur not only those who serve under her, but all who encounter her to give our beloved city our all. As a Co-convenor of the Ward 7 Faith Leaders and as those who are engaged 7 days a week in efforts to stem the tide of violence, Rev. Karen Curry and I wholeheartedly recommend that the Council approve Pamela A. Smith as the Chief of District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police Department.

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